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[THE TIMELY SUCCOUR.]

## THE IMAGE IN THE HEART.

### 3 Christmas Story.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Dangerous Ground," "Heart's Content," "Sweet Eglantine," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER VII.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,  
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow.

Burns.  
The events that took place upon the discovery that Jammers was in possession of the Image in the Heart did not make Mr. Edleston's household a very happy one.

Zoraide feared she knew not what. A dark suspicion haunted her mind, and she was afraid to give it shape.

Yet it pursued her in a shadowy, ungainly form, black, hideous, indistinct, and a voice seemed to whisper to her that her mother and her father had been privy to the abduction of Drummond Magendie's child. They had everything to gain by his disappearance. While he lived they could not hope to come into the property which they so much coveted, but if he were once out of the way the case became different. They were the only heirs, and stood a chance of inheriting a property without its equal in the county in which it was situated.

If her suspicions were correct her parents had been guilty of an atrocious crime, and she could not blush to think that they had descended so low in the moral scale.

Her conscience was also perplexed, because she knew that it was wrong to keep possession of that which really belonged to another.

But she had not been brought up very strictly, and her religious principles did not impel her to go away from the beautiful house in which she lived and give up all the luxuries with which the late Mr. Magendie's wealth surrounded her.

She worried herself a little at first, but at length other matters occupied her mind, and, if a thought ever recurred to her of the lost child, the strange intruder of Christmas Eve, and the Image in the Heart, she tried to get rid of the uneasy feeling with which it inspired her as soon as possible.

Mr. and Mrs. Edleston were grave and preoccupied for some time, and held frequent conversations together in private, but they also grew cheerful as they heard nothing more of Jammers, and thought he was not able to perform as much as he had threatened.

Indeed, the task he had set himself was a hard one. To search for a tramp in a densely populated country like England is a difficult labour, requiring years for its performance, unless some lucky chance steps in and brings the searcher face to face with the person for whom he is seeking.

All they heard of Jammers in two months was that he had quitted his employment at Mr. Gainford's without assigning any reason for it, and had gone away no one knowing whither.

That the man was at work neither Mr. Edleston nor his wife could doubt, and that he would do his utmost to find the child, prove his case, and dispossess them of their property, they firmly believed.

It was an unfortunate chance which enabled him to overhear the important conversation between Mrs. Edleston and her daughter, and it was equally unlucky that he should have obtained possession of the image in the crystal heart.

But after they had carefully considered the matter they were of opinion that they could afford to defy him, and might buy him off at the last moment, if he came to them with positive proof that he had found the missing child.

For both the husband and wife thought that the circumstantial evidence in favour of the man who had given Zoraide the heart being Mr. Magendie's lost son Leslie was very strong indeed.

However, they calmed their fears. Mr. Edleston became a Member of Parliament, and the family went to town for the season.

Zoraide now for the first time plunged into what is called the vortex of society. As is usual with people who become suddenly rich, the Edlestons cut all their former acquaintances, and cultivated the nobility and others whose position in the fashionable world was acknowledged.

The consequence was that party succeeded party, ball followed ball, kettle-drums, fêtes, garden parties, and all that goes to make up the giddy whirl of aristocratic life in the London season was a part of Miss Edleston's existence.

Great was the admiration her beauty excited, and endless the numbers of suitors for her hand which her wealth brought her.

Related through her mother to an old county family, the daughter of an M.P. who boasted that he could and would give her one hundred thousand pounds on her marriage, superlatively lovely, graceful, and accomplished, is it at all wonderful that men struggled for an introduction to her, and that bets were made at the clubs as to who would carry off the heiress?

She was the belle of her season, but, strange to say, she did not meet with any one upon whom she could bestow her heart.

More than one coronet would have gladly been placed at her feet, yet she made no sign that such an accession of rank would be agreeable to her.

Her parents wondered at this, and she was questioned by her mother as to the cause of her indifference to many beauty and the advantages which an alliance with a nobleman would give her.

"If you were well married, my dear," said her mother, "a great weight would be removed from your father's heart as well as mine. The distant but ever-present danger of an heir coming to claim our property in accordance with the provisions of your uncle's will would lose half its sting. You are young, but next season you will not be so fresh and attractive. A girl goes down each successive season. Now you have all London at your feet, and can pick and choose. Do not be too careless."

"I am not averse to marriage, far from it, mamma,



dear," replied Zoraide. "But, I give you my word, that as yet I have seen no man whom I could really love; there are several I like, but not enough to marry. You have told me yourself that marriage is a very serious thing, and I am sure, at my age, there is no great hurry. I shall meet some one some day whom, I have no doubt, I shall love very dearly and tenderly, then, dear mamma, you shall order the orange blossoms and the trousseau, and I shall worry you no more."

Mrs. Edleston was obliged to be content with this answer, and when the season was over they went to the Priory, a week or two before the shooting season commenced.

A brilliant circle of guests had accepted invitations to stay at the Priory, and a constant succession of excursions and amusements was kept up for their edification.

Whatever a lavish expenditure of money could procure was provided for Mr. Edleston's guests, who were loud in their praise of his taste and generosity.

It was at a picnic in the neighbourhood of some ruins, famous for their preservation and antiquity, not more than twelve miles from the Priory, that Zoraide met with the next adventure which gave a colour to her life and led her once more to explain that the hand of Fate was visible in the shaping of her destiny.

It was a lovely day in autumn. The leaves were just changing colour, and presented a variety of tints which were very charming to the eye.

The guests invited to the Priory had travelled in carriages to Beaumarion Castle, and picnicked amongst the ruins.

Zoraide had strayed from her companions to explore the ruins alone and at her leisure. Hers was a romantic mind, and she pictured to herself the knight's of old and their lady loves, the former sallying forth to war, clad in their mail, or enjoying the pursuit of hawking in time of peace, the latter engaged at their tapestry work, talking to one another of their lovers and recounting their deeds of arms.

Suddenly, while standing on the edge of a wall belonging to what had been a tower, her foot slipped. The masonry gave way, and she fell down an inclined plane, the slope being about five-and-twenty yards long.

Some stunted bushes grew on the grass-covered mound, and she caught at one in her headlong descent.

Fortunately it bore her weight, and she hung suspended, as it were, in midair, scarcely knowing what had happened to her.

Terribly alarmed, she looked below and saw an accumulation of blocks of stone, about fifteen feet below her, against which she must infallibly be dashed if she let go her hold.

Her party was scattered about in every direction except hers, for she saw nothing but the time-honoured walls of the broken tower above her, over which a few noisy jackdaws wheeled and chattered, while below were certain injury and probable death.

Hoping to attract attention, she uttered several piercing screams.

No one came!

The tension was so great that her arms already felt as if they were being torn from their sockets, and the loose, flowing dress she wore waved to and fro in the wind.

"Heaven help me!" she muttered. "I feel that I cannot hold on much longer. I must let go! If I could be killed out right, it would not be so dreadful, but to be maimed and hurt for a long time—"

She broke off abruptly, thinking she heard a voice, nor was she mistaken.

Just above her head a man was standing, and with him were two pointer dogs, who looked over the miniature precipice with a sort of curiosity.

"Can you hold on for a few minutes longer?" asked the man.

"Yes," feebly replied Zoraide.

The man threw upon the ground a gun he carried and looked over the brink carefully.

Some more loose masonry broke away and rolled down the hill with a clattering noise.

One big block very narrowly escaped hitting the shuddering girl on the head.

With a rapidity which evinced his presence of mind, the man took a piece of rope which he had in his pocket and tied it to a tree, allowing the other end to swing down loosely.

"Can you reach that?" he asked.

"No," answered Zoraide, looking longingly at the cord, which swayed to and fro just above her head.

"I feared not," he answered. "Never mind. Hold on. If you could have reached it, perhaps you could not have supported your own weight. I will try another plan."

He hauled up the rope and made it fast round his left arm, then, with the skill of a chamois hunter, descended the precipitous side of the mound. When

he reached the extremity of the rope he stretched out his hand to Zoraide.

"Oh! make haste," she cried, "I shall fall. My arms ache so. I cannot hold on any longer."

Just then he grasped her firmly and drew her up gradually, until he got his arm round her waist, then he felt she was safe.

"Be brave," he whispered; "the worst is over now."

But she could not answer him, for she had fainted, and lay like a log in his arms.

By planting his feet firmly in the ground, holding Zoraide in one arm, and drawing himself up the rope by the other, he managed to reach the summit.

In ascending ten feet he was nearly as many minutes.

He laid his lovely burden on the grass at the side of the old tower, then sank down himself to recover his strength, being unable to further attend to her.

Zoraide's swoon was of short duration. She opened her eyes, sighed, and the stern reality of what had happened burst upon her. She was saved, and her accident had been productive of no disastrous results. Where was her saviour? She rose to her feet, feeling rather dizzy, and looked around her. The gentleman who had saved her was by her side in a moment. She saw before her, as she turned to confront him, a handsome, well-dressed man of thirty or thereabouts. His blue eyes, curly hair, and expressive features rendered him peculiarly interesting, and she thought she had never before seen so good-looking a man.

He was a man to look up to, to respect, to love, to adore even, and no sooner had she fixed her gaze upon him than Cupid shot an arrow into her heart, and she dropped her eyes with maidenly confusion, while her face was suffused with a soft blush.

"I trust," said the gentleman, at whose feet his dogs were crouching, "that you have suffered no inconvenience from your fall."

"Thanks to your courage and timely succour," answered Zoraide, "I am none the worse, though I shudder to think what might have happened in a short time had you not been at hand to care for me."

"It was indeed lucky that I happened to be passing this way," he said. "The fact is I was partridge shooting, and cut across by the castle to reach some turnings fields which I have always found a good cover for the birds."

"May I inquire to whom I am indebted for such a valuable service?"

"Certainly. My name is Vanderlyn, and I live with my family at Cedar Grove near here. This ruin is our property."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Zoraide, much surprised. "We have had the honour of a call from you, and unfortunately when we returned your very agreeable visit we found you had left the country for the season."

"And you are—?"

"Miss Edleston, of the Priory."

"I am charmed to think, Miss Edleston," answered Mr. Vanderlyn, "that we have had the good fortune to meet in so romantic a manner."

"Are you fond, then, of romance?"

"Oh, yes. I have travelled a good deal in search of it, and have met with my share of adventure, which, however, never satisfies a man who is fond of it. A love of adventure grows with what it feeds on. I hope we shall meet again soon."

He raised his hat and whistled to his dogs, as if about to depart.

"You must not go yet," said Zoraide, hastily. "Permit me to have the pleasure of introducing you to my papa. He must thank you in person for your bravery."

"Are you not alone?"

"Oh, no. We came to picnic here, and I strayed from my party, whom we shall find at the other side of the knoll. Do please come with me, and we will see if the work of destruction has left any pigeon pie free from havoc. Champagne, I know, I can promise you in plenty."

"You are very good, and as I have had a long tramp over the stubble I will gladly accept your invitation, though I must protest against being made the hero of your adventure. There is nothing I detest so much as being thanked and stared at and made a raze-show of."

Zoraide laughed and led the way back to the spot where they had launched, Mr. Vanderlyn following her leisurely, and looking half pleased, half annoyed at the turn the affair had taken.

"A lovely girl," he muttered, "and an heiress they say. There is some satisfaction in saving a life so valuable."

While Zoraide in her turn said to herself:

"They said he was handsome, but he is ten thousand times more so than I imagined. He is beautiful as Adonis, and his manner is so soft and pleasant

and yet so manly. I am delighted to have met him."

Presently they came upon their little party, some of whom were still eating and drinking, others sitting, reading, talking, smoking, and generally enjoying themselves, each after his or her fashion.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

Backward coiled and crowding low,  
With glaring eyeballs watch thy foe. Baillie.

In falling Zoraide had torn her dress and scratched her hands. Her hair had escaped from its fastening, and she looked a little wild and flushed.

Her friends crowded round her to inquire the cause of the alteration in her appearance, and to them she related in glowing terms the kindness Mr. Vanderlyn had done her.

Every eye was turned upon the young man, who received quite an ovation. Mr. and Mrs. Edleston shook him by the hand, and thanked him warmly for the service he had rendered their darling daughter.

Several of the guests being country people knew him, and he soon felt himself at home and amongst friends. It was remarked by the unmarried ladies and the mammas who had daughters to dispose of that Mr. Vanderlyn kept as close to Zoraide's side all the afternoon as it was possible for him to do.

Towards evening Zoraide felt as if she had known Horace Vanderlyn for years. There was an easy charm in his manner when he took a liking to any one which induced you to keep at a distance with such a genial companion.

A fire was made, the kettle was boiled in rustic fashion, and tea poured out, preparative to a start homewards, as the evenings were a little too chilly to render the air agreeable.

While thus engaged a caravan belonging to some gypsies stopped on a grass plot in front of the ruined keep.

They opened a couple of tents, lighted a fire, and made all their preparations for encamping for the night.

Tall, handsome, but somewhat forbidding-looking men lounged about; dusky children played and inspected the picnickers at a distance; while the women, with their dark skins and glossy black hair, busied themselves in various occupations.

"See," exclaimed Zoraide, "these are real gypsies, while we are only imitation ones; they spend their lives in the open air."

"For my part," said her father, "I should not care about such an existence. The ground, considered as a bed, in wet weather, is dreadfully suggestive of rheumatism."

"And earwigs in summer," put in Miss Hudson.

"I wonder," said a county magistrate, "that Vanderlyn allows the rascals to camp on his ground. They are a set of petty thieves."

"I have not found them so," replied Vanderlyn, "and, to tell the truth, I rather admire the freedom of their way of living. I never molest them, nor will allow my men to do so. The worst larcenies they are guilty of is taking a few turnips for their pot or snaring a rabbit or two. They make baskets and nets, and sell skewers and things of that sort, while the women have a few fancy articles for the servants at the houses they come near. I have known them take as much as five shillings at the back door from my servants."

"Then they tell fortunes," said Miss Hudson. "Oh! I think gypsies are such lovely creatures, and it is so nice to have one's fortune told."

"Have you ever undergone such an operation?" asked Mr. Edleston.

"Yes, once."

"I suppose you heard all about the fair gentleman who was coming to court the dark lady?" exclaimed Mr. Vanderlyn.

"I am not fond of fair gentlemen," answered Miss Hudson, pouting her lips.

There was a laugh, and Zoraide said:

"I should so like to have my fortune told. Will any one come with me?"

"With pleasure."

It was Mr. Vanderlyn who spoke, and he rose promptly.

Zoraide took his arm and they walked away amid the merriment of the company.

A woman of middle age saw them coming and advanced to meet them, knowing well that she could prey upon their credulity and obtain some money.

"Let the gypsy woman tell you what the stars say, lady, about your fortune," she exclaimed.

"I thought you told fortunes by palmistry, that is, by the lines in one's hand," answered Zoraide.

"Whichever way you like, my dear. If you tell me the hour, day, and year of your birth, I have a table compiled by an Arabian astrologer which will enable me to let you know the truth about your des-

tiny; so extend your pretty palm and I will do the same."

"I suppose there is not much difference between the two methods," said Mr. Vanderlyn, laughing.

"The stars are less likely to err than the lines of your hand, sir, that is all."

Zoraide considered the gipsy an arrant impostor, but she took off her glove for the fun of the thing as she said, and, giving the gipsy a half-sovereign, waited for her to scrutinize her hand.

She pored over it for more than a minute.

"Now, lady, ask me what questions you like," she exclaimed, with a confident glance, as if she had mastered the secret.

"Well," replied Zoraide, "first of all, am I threatened with any hidden danger?"

"You are. But the danger is not altogether hidden; it has been partly revealed to you."

Zoraide started. This answer was so peculiar.

"Shall I marry?" she went on.

"You will."

"Tell me more about my marriage."

"Your friends will want you to marry one whom you do not like, and you will be subjected to great misery in consequence."

"Will he be rich or poor?"

"Poor—very poor," answered the gipsy.

"Come along, we have had enough of this rubbish," said Mr. Vanderlyn, almost roughly. "Pardon me for my abruptness," he added, "but I have no patience with such mummery. How on earth can the old woman possibly know?"

"I do not mind her nonsense," answered Zoraide, who, nevertheless, had become rather pale.

"You deserve to be put in the stocks," continued Mr. Vanderlyn, addressing the gipsy. "Fortunetelling is an imposture denounced by law and punishable in a police court; bear that in mind."

"If you are as bad as I, for you encouraged me," replied the gipsy, boldly. "You are angry with me for telling the truth, which is never pleasant. Did you want me to tell you falsehoods? You asked me for a display of my art, and I gave it you."

Horace Vanderlyn bit his lip and motioned to Zoraide to come away.

She turned for that purpose, when she saw a few yards off, standing motionless, a figure that she could never forget.

It looked weird and unearthly as it stood in the shadow of the keep, increasing in obscurity in the growing darkness; but it was not more strange or terrible than when she had first seen it.

A movement of the hand beckoned her.

Compelled to obey the summons by a remarkable and irresistible fascination, she said to her companion:

"Will you kindly wait here for me?"

"Why?" he asked, laconically.

"Because I must speak to that gipsy."

Before he could question her further or remonstrate with her she had gone.

"We meet again," said the gipsy, with a smile.

"Yes," she answered. "But I did not expect to see you here. If you want your locket I cannot give it you."

It was the owner of the Image in the Heart to whom she spoke.

"Why not?" he demanded, almost sternly, while his eyes flashed. "Was it not a sacred trust? Did you not pledge me your honour as a lady that when I claimed it you would restore it to me?"

"Yes, yes," answered Zoraide. "You misunderstand me. I have not it with me. I do not carry it about with me, in case I should lose it."

The falsehood satisfied him. The angry expression of his features faded away, and he was calm once more.

"Excuse me, miss," he said, "but I did not mean to frighten you with my violence. Here is your purse, and in it the same amount of money you gave me on Christmas Eve. Take it. I shall come and claim the locket."

"Will you not sell it to me?" asked Zoraide.

"No," he replied.

"I will give you much more than it is worth. In fact I have taken quite a fancy to it."

"Nothing on earth would induce me to part with it," replied the man. "I would not have entrusted it to you on the night when first we met had I not wished to remove from your mind the idea that I was a vulgar thief. No. It is mine. They tell me it is my birthright, and I shall know all same day. Keep it till I come."

With those words he made a polite bow and disappeared behind some trees.

Zoraide remained as if rooted to the spot for a short space, and was only recalled to herself by Mr. Vanderlyn, who approached her with ill-disguised uneasiness.

"Has that fellow been saying anything to annoy you?" he asked.

"Oh, no," answered Zoraide, recovering herself. "If he had I'd break every bone in his rascally skin. I was afraid that he was attempting to extort money from you by threats."

"To tell you the truth, I was a little afraid of him, he looked so wild," said Zoraide, with whom falsehoods were now familiar companions. "I gave him a trifle as he said he was poor, that is all. Will you take me back, please? I feel quite cold and shivery."

They returned to the party and were asked a multitude of questions about the fortune-teller, which Zoraide answered with apparent unconcern.

As soon as she obtained an opportunity she drew her father on one side.

"What is it, my dear?" he asked.

"Come where no one can hear us," she answered, drawing him into the shade.

"You look quite white," said Mr. Edleston. "Has anything happened?"

"I have seen him."

"Who?" demanded Mr. Edleston, anxiously.

"The owner of the Image in the Heart."

"Bless me!—where? We must make some inquiries about him."

"That will be easy. He belongs to that encampment of gypsies. When I went to have my fortune told with Mr. Vanderlyn I saw him, and he asked for my crystal locket. Somehow or other, that man frightens me."

"This is grave," said Mr. Edleston, thoughtfully.

"With the gypsies, is he? Then he is a tramp, or what is the same thing. Tell me all that occurred."

Zoraide did so, and Mr. Edleston listened with the utmost attention.

"Go amongst our guests, my dear," he said, "and do not let your looks betray that anything unusual has happened. If I should be asked for you, say that I have strolled to look after the carriages."

"What do you mean to do, papa?" asked Zoraide.

"I mean to find out what I can about this singular young man. Now is the time, always strike when the iron's hot. Those gypsies are here to-day and gone to-morrow."

"You must not let them know that you are anxious about him, or they may suspect something," Zoraide said.

"Trust me. I have not lived all these years in the world without knowing how to conduct an affair of this sort without blundering. When I was quite a young man I was the inquiry clerk in a lawyer's office, and that is good training for intrigue," answered Mr. Edleston, with a satisfied smile.

Zoraide saw him glide away in the direction of the gypsies' tents, while she returned to the fire round which the guests were gathered.

A lady was singing very sweetly, and a gentleman accompanied her on the flute, and, in the meantime, Mr. Vanderlyn busied himself in brewing a bowl of punch with a bottle of rum, some curaçoa, and other things.

The fire-light flashed its ruddy glow into the girls' faces, fresh logs were piled on, shawls were drawn over fair shoulders, and so pleasantly passed the time that all forgot that the carriages were getting ready to take them back to a late dinner at the Priory.

#### CHAPTER IX.

Quoth I thus softly to myself,

What strange things have we here? Drayton.

GONE AT ONCE TO THE GYPSIES' ENCAMPMENT, MR. EDESTON ADDRESSED A MAN, SAYING:

"Where have you come from?"

"What's that to you?" answered the man, gruffly.

"Do you know you are trespassing?" continued Mr. Edleston, with rising anger.

"If we have permission to pitch here how can we be trespassing? You're not Mr. Vanderlyn, and this ground belongs to him. Perhaps you're one of our persecutors—if so you'd best be off, lest we do something worse than set the dogs at you."

The gipsy spoke gruffly, because there was something in his accoster's manner that he did not like. He looked officious and purse-prond, and the independence implanted in the Gitana's breast led him to be impudent when he had the chance.

"You misunderstand me," rejoined Mr. Edleston, smothering his resentment by an effort. "I mean you no harm. Lead me to the chief of your tribe, and I will reward you for your civility."

"Service, you mean," rejoined the man; "you've not seen much civility yet."

He smiled at his rough joke, and motioned to Mr. Edleston to follow him, looking as ungainly and ill-conditioned a fellow as well might be. He led him to the tent in which the old woman who had told Zoraide's fortune was sitting, and called to her, saying:

"Bachel, a gentleman wants to speak to you," then he held out his hand, received some money, and went away to light his pipe at the fire.

"A dangerous race, these gypsies," muttered Mr. Edleston; "they should be suppressed. A wandering life must beget vagabondage."

"Do you want me?" exclaimed a voice at his elbow.

He turned, and saw a woman in a faded cotton dress, with a handkerchief tied round her head, standing close to him, and he retreated a pace, as if he thought she might pick his pocket.

"Yes," he answered. "It is necessary that I should ask you a few questions. I will be candid with you, because I think candour is likely to put us on a friendly footing. I am the owner of property in this neighbourhood. On Christmas Eve last one of your tribe broke into my house. My daughter gave him money, in return for which he lent her a crystal locket, saying it was his only treasure, and that he would reclaim it when he could honestly repay her. This was remorse on his part, possibly, but I simply tell you the tale as it occurred."

"Basil!" ejaculated the woman.

"You know the one I mean, evidently!" said Mr. Edleston.

"I do. It must be Basil. I have not seen his locket for some time, and when I have questioned him he has always evaded me. Yes, it is Basil."

"I have no wish to do him an injury; on the contrary, I should like to be of service to him. Where there is shame there is a chance of reformation. My daughter recognized him just now, and told me as much. I sought you out, thinking that, if some situation could be procured for him, he might be saved from bad future, as he has been once on the brink of a crime. Probably he is your son?"

"No; I am a Lee, and I am proud of it, but, though I love Basil as a son, and he loves me for my kindness to him, he is not one of us by birth."

"What do you know of his origin?" pursued Mr. Edleston, carelessly.

"Not much," answered Rachel Lee, thrown off her guard by the apparently purposeless way in which he put his questions. "It is nearly twenty years ago now since we were in camp on the skirts of the Forest of Ellesmere, which, as you know, if you reside here, lies to the south-west of Elvetham. Under a hedge we found a woman and a child. The woman was very ill—evidently dying. She did not live through the night."

"What was her illness?"

"I scarcely know. We buried her ourselves under a tree. She had been hiding in the forest for some reason or other, and exposure to the weather must have been the cause of her decease."

"She left the child to your care, I presume," said Mr. Edleston.

"Yes, and I accepted the charge, as who with a heart would not understand circumstances?" answered Rachel, showing more feeling than a casual observer would have given her credit for possessing.

"Do you know anything of his parentage?"

"Nothing. He had round his neck the locket of which you spoke, and he would not have parted with that for any light reason, for his mother, as we suppose she was, said in dying that it was his birthright, and would help him to his own some day."

"He did not attach very much importance to such an idle tale," said Mr. Edleston, "or he would not have given it to my daughter."

"You see, sir," answered Rachel, "he did not like to be caught in such an act. He scarcely knew why he entered the house. Call him a thief in intention if you will, but think of us at that time. It was hard times with us, and we were starving. The snow was on the ground. I never remember such a bitter Christmas for camping out in. Fancy us, sir, half perished with cold and hunger. He had asked for food from your servants, and they had driven him from the door. None of us had tasted so much as a morsel of dry bread all day. He had seen you through the window curtains at dinner. You left on your plates more than would have fed us all. It maddened him."

"Perhaps you are right," replied Mr. Edleston as he thought of his own poverty-stricken days.

"I shall know more some day," answered the gipsy, with a knowing look.

"How is that?"

"When the woman whose name we did not know found that she was going fast she whispered in my ear a grand secret."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Edleston, on tiptoe with expectation.

"She said she had put in a box made of iron all the papers which would prove the boy to be a gentleman, and that box she had buried under a tree in Ellesmere Forest."

"Do you know where?"

It was painful now to watch the efforts Mr. Edleston made to be calm.

"Oh, yes; I know, and I alone. The lad Basil, as

we call him, does not know. The secret was deposited with me, and I have kept it."

"Have you opened the box?"

"No," replied Rachel.

"Why is that? You cannot have the boy's interest fully at heart," said her interrogator.

"You say that because you do not know all. I was strictly commanded not to open that box until the lad was five-and-twenty. The reason for this request would be fully explained by documents to be found in it."

"What then?"

"Then I was to take the box to Mr. Gainford, a solicitor in Elvetham, and ask him and the clergyman of the parish to see justice done."

"A very proper thing, too," said Mr. Edleston; "I cannot praise it too much, but I do think that the lapse of time is calculated to do injury to the boy's interests. I know Mr. Gainford; tell me where the box is and we will open it at once. If the lad is entitled to money or property we will see that he has it."

Rachel hesitated, and seemed to be deliberating with herself.

Suddenly the sky was illuminated with a brilliant meteor, which seemed to flash right across their faces.

The manner of the gipsy woman changed in an instant.

"Go!" she cried, in a voice of alarm. "Go from our camp. The stars have spoken. You mean him harm. You are no friend of Basil's, and I have told you too much!"

"What do you mean, woman?" exclaimed Mr. Edleston, beside himself with rage.

"Do I not say that the stars have spoken? Was not what we saw but just now at once a warning and a rebuke? Go! there is evil in your eye; I can see it. You mean him harm!"

"Will you not listen to reason? I have money; name any sum you——"

"Ephraim, Jabez, here, all of you! An enemy is in the camp. Strike the tents; we must onward this night!" continued the gipsy.

Mr. Edleston saw dark forms running towards him from all quarters, and, fearful of some act of violence towards his own person, he retreated as rapidly as possible, and gained the shelter of his own circle with a sigh of relief.

But he could not help anathematizing the fatuous superstition of the gipsy, which, at the appearance of the meteor, a phenomenon very common at that time of the year, had cut short a conversation which promised to be of the utmost value to him. As it was he knew too much and too little.

Too much for his peace of mind.

Too little to enable him to satisfactorily follow up the trail, the commencement of which he had struck with such accuracy.

(To be continued.)

**THE WIFE'S CHANCE.**—Late one night, the most miserable of all human beings, a drunken husband, after spending his whole evening at a public-house, set out for home. "Well," said he to himself, "if I find my wife up I'll scold her; what business has she to sit up, wasting fire and light, eh? And if I find her in bed I'll scold her; what right has she to go to bed before I get home?"

**SOLDIERS' DISEASES.**—In a report on the health of the Artillery division of Royal Marines Staff-Surgeon Dr. Jenkins states that on the march the dress and accoutrements of a man weigh 48lb.; and that on a long march in active service the addition of a blanket, water, and three days' provisions, would bring the weight up to 60lb., without allowing for ammunition. The weight may be unavoidable, but not so the manner in which it is carried. The dress is in some parts tight to the extreme—collar, tunic, trousers pressing unequally on the superficial venous circulation, and compressing the pectoralis, latissimus dorsi, and muscles of respiration; and the knapsack straps, passing under the armpits again, compress the free edge of the pectoral muscle and the deltoid, two of the most powerful in moving the arm. It is not surprising that we find diseases of the heart and circulatory system. In the year 1869, on which Dr. Jenkins is reporting, 77 cases of heart disease or aneurism were under treatment, and caused a loss to this branch of the service by invaliding 38 men, or 22·45 per 1,000 of mean force. Nearly one-third of all cases of invaliding suffered from disease of the heart; and one-third of the deaths arose from the same cause. Dr. Jenkins says:—"The tight-fitting trousers, which, during breakfast or dinner, have been unbuckled at the waist, can only be rebuttoned by forcibly compressing the abdomen, and pushing the stomach and diaphragm upwards into the cavity of the thorax, while the tight-fitting tunic, with its powerful ally, the belt, resists the invasion by pre-

venting the thorax from expanding upwards or laterally. The consequences are that the lungs are compressed and circulation through them impeded; the heart becomes surcharged, and labours to clear itself, as its tumultuous and irregular action testifies, as well as the pain, palpitation, dyspnoea, vertigo, and fainting, which ensue afterwards. That it is also a cause of epilepsy is not improbable, from the fact that the first seizure in the cases which have come under notice has generally taken place when the man was on parade or fully accounted." Dr. Jenkins adds:—"Efforts at improvement already made have not been without fruit; the old rigid strangulating stock has disappeared; the cumbersome knapsack has given way to one at least less so, and men in this corps are allowed to wear a light serge or duck jacket while at gun drill and fatigue duty, instead of the buttoned-up 'shell.' But much remains to be done before the soldier can be freed from those trammels which so literally bind him, and before he can, like other hard-working men, be said to 'strip to his work.' At the date of this return the new value is under trial, and appears to be a step in the right direction. The men seem to approve of it, although it is said to keep the lads too warm."

#### ONCE IN A WHILE.

ONCE in a while, in this world so strange,  
To lighten our sad regrets,  
We find a heart that is true through change,—  
A heart that never forgets;  
But rare as a blossoming rose in December,  
As a bird in an arctic clime,  
Is a heart—a heart that can remember,  
Through sorrow, and change, and time,  
Once in a while we find a love  
That will last through life and death,  
Ay! that will follow the soul above,  
Not passing away with the breath;  
But rarer, oh, rarer far, and stranger  
Than a spring in the desert sand  
Is a love that will last, with toil, and danger,  
And strife on every hand.  
Once in a while we find a friend  
That will cling through good and ill,  
Whose friendship follows us even to the end,  
Be it up or adown the hill;  
But the heart so true, and the love so tender,  
And friendship's faithful smile,  
Whether we dwell in squalour or splendour,  
We find but "Once in a while."

E. W.

#### SCIENCE.

**RIFLED GUNS.**—It is announced to be the intention of the authorities at the War Department to have the whole of the old pattern smooth-bore 68-pounder guns, now in store at Chatham, converted into rifled guns, a considerable sum being taken for the proposed work in the estimates for the approaching year.

**ELECTRIC LIGHTS FOR SHIPS.**—M. Marten suggests the plan of attaching to sailing vessels a screw propeller, the motion of which shall be obtained from the movement of the ship. The author proposes to utilize the power so obtained in giving motion to an electro-magnetic apparatus, from which such vessels may be supplied with the convenience of an electric light, thus dispensing with the use of oil, and gaining besides the advantage of the greatly increased illumination.

**NEW ARMY SADDLE.**—A new saddle has recently been approved of by the War Office for the use of the Cavalry and Royal Artillery. The high wooden peg has been abolished, and the rings in front have been removed to the left side. The advantages of the new saddle are that it will be more easy for the men to mount and dismount, whilst the height will be much less on the horse's back. It is to be hoped that Mr. Cardwell will place this new saddle on the right style of horse, and that he will not attempt any economical tricks now that he has got a lighter saddle.

**TRANSPARENT VARNISHES.**—The aniline colours are particularly well adapted for the manufacture of transparent lac, which possess great intensity even in very thin films, and are hence very suitable for colouring glass or mica. The process recommended by F. Springmuhl is to prepare separately an alcoholic solution of bleached shellac or sandarach and a concentrated alcoholic solution of the colouring matter, which last is added to the lac before using it, the glass or mica to be coated being slightly warmed. Coloured films of great beauty may also be obtained, according to the author, from coloured solutions of gun cotton in ether, the colouring matter being here dissolved in alcohol and ether. The collodion film has its elasticity greatly increased by the addition

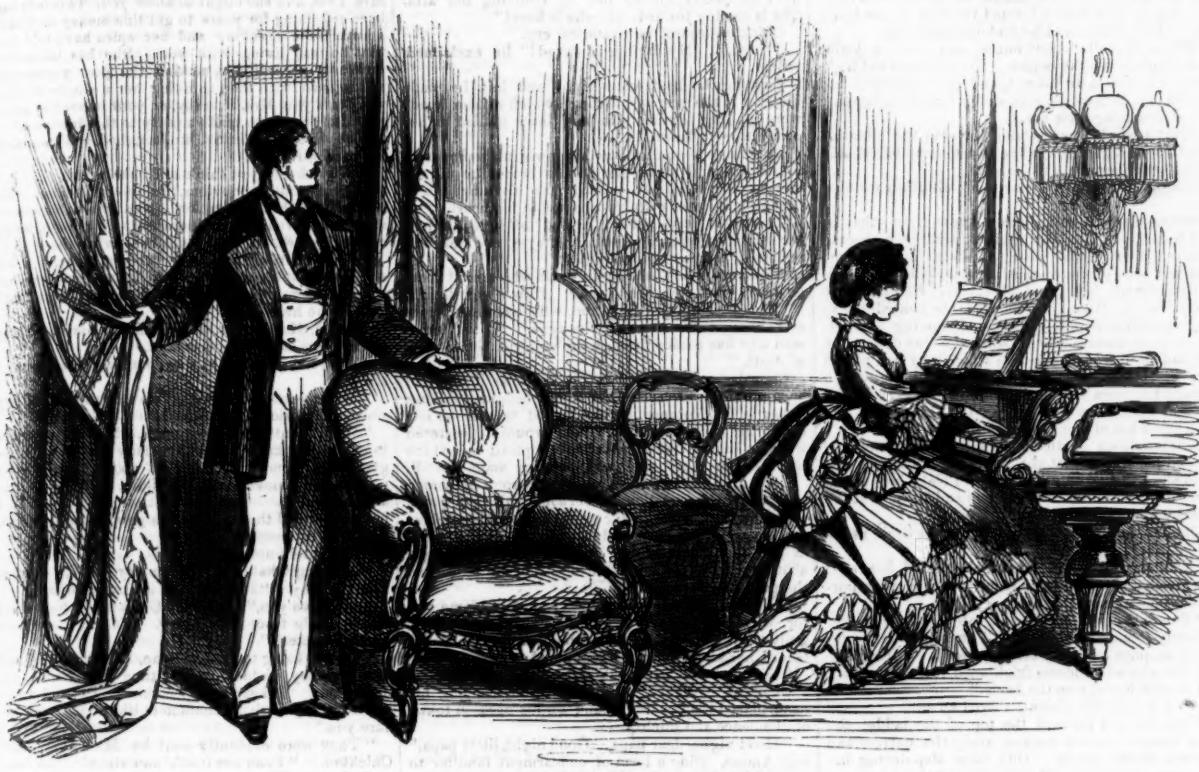
of some turpentine oil, and, when applied cold, can be removed entire. The coloured films may now be cut into any pattern, and again attached to transparent objects.

**ROCK-DRILLING MACHINE.**—The invention of Mr. Osterkamp, Aix-la-Chapelle, consists essentially of a cylinder and piston; the piston fills the cylinder partially, and is rendered air-tight by a packing made of five or more rings or recesses turned out on the surface of the piston. In the same manner the piston-rod is kept air-tight in the cover or stuffing-box, through which it works. The drill is fixed to the outer end of the piston by a wedge. The other end of the piston-rod is formed square, and embraces a rod which passes through the cover of the cylinder, and has a bevel wheel fitted thereto for imparting rotary motion to the piston. The piston at the same time works up and down the cylinder with a piston-rod.

**VENTILATING TUNNELS.**—The invention of Mr. J. D. Brunton, of Leighton Crescent, consists in ventilating railway and other tunnels through which steam-engines pass, by placing in the upper part of the tunnel to be ventilated a longitudinal tube or chamber of metal or other suitable material extending throughout the entire length of the tunnel. Or the inventor constructs such a longitudinal chamber in the lining or masonry or brickwork of the tunnel. In either case such a part of the tunnel is selected as shall be most convenient for receiving into the tube or chamber the steam, as also the smoke and other products of combustion as they pass out of the funnel of the engine whilst in the tunnel.

**CHAMELEON BAROMETER.**—M. Lenoir, of Paris, an inventor as fertile as ingenious, who is especially known by the gas engine that bears his name, and by a system of autographic telegraphy, has just introduced a kind of barometer which at least has the merit of ingenuity. It is composed of a dial, in the centre of which is traced a circle, the diameter of which is almost half that of the dial. The annular space comprised between the two circumferences is divided into four sections; on the lower one is inscribed the name of the inventor and that of the apparatus, "baromètre caméléon;" the compartment to the left is pink, and bears the inscription "much rain," the top one is gray, with the word "variable," and that on the right greenish blue, with the words "set fair." The paper in the centre circle changes colour according to the state of the atmosphere, conforming to the tint of one or other of the three coloured compartments, according as it may be very damp, tolerably dry, or extremely dry. The apparatus is, in fact, more a hygrometer than a barometer. The change of colour in the central paper is produced by atmospheric humidity. This sensitive paper is prepared with a mixture of chlorine of cobalt and of marine salts, added to glycerine to attract the humidity. Salts of cobalt, nickel, copper, etc., are largely employed in the production of sympathetic inks, with which writing or drawings can be made, invisible at ordinary temperatures, but which are made visible under a slight heat, and disappear when the temperature falls.

**THE ARTIFICIAL VOLCANO.**—Dr. Fred. V. Hochstetter furnishes an interesting account of a phenomenon occurring during one of the phases of a manufacturing operation, which is, as he claims, a complete duplicate, upon a miniature scale, of a volcanic eruption, and it serves at the same time to confirm the modern views concerning the process of an eruption, according to which the lava is not simply in a molten condition, but is reduced to the state of liquidity by the action of superheated water vapour under great pressure. The phenomenon referred to occurs in the operation of separating the sulphur from the residual products obtained in the manufacture of soda by Leblanc's process. The sulphur obtained from these residues, in order to free it from the gypsum or sulphate of lime mixed with it, is melted in a suitable apparatus, with steam under a pressure of from two to three atmospheres. The gypsum remains suspended in the water, and the fused sulphur is from time to time run off into wooden troughs or forms, the temperature of the fluid mass being about 122 deg. C. (251·6 deg. F.) Almost instantly after the pouring, a crust of solid sulphur is formed on the surface of the mass. Dotted over this surface, however, the orifices are left from which the liquid beneath is forced up. At intervals a jet of sulphur bubbles out, and, cooling, forms around the orifice a slight prominence; the repeated eruptions accumulate material about it, until a miniature volcanic cone is formed, with its crater well defined. The cause of this curious phenomenon is found in the fact that the sulphur, in its fused condition in the steam chamber, takes up and retains a certain quantity of water, and this absorbed water, it appears, is given out gradually in the form of steam, as the sulphur solidifies. The slowly liberated steam, accumulating pressure beneath the crust of sulphur, forces, at regular intervals, an outlet at the vents, carrying with it in its passage the molten material to form the solid cone.



## THE THREE PASSIONS.

BY THE

Author of "Sweet Eglantine," "Evander," &amp;c., &amp;c.

### CHAPTER XXI.

The fire i' the flint  
Shows not till it be struck.

I am not of that feather to shake off my friend  
when he most needs me. *Tunon of Athens.*

The discovery that Grace Ives had been actually at work while he was unconscious of her activity came upon Chickton like a thunderclap, and his annoyance knew no bounds when he reflected that he had been living in the same house with, and meeting every day, the very man of whom he was in search without being aware of his identity.

Prescott was anxious to know more, and exclaimed :

"Who is this Grace Ives of whom you speak, and why should my friend have incurred her enmity?"

"The story is a long one. When I have leisure you shall know it from the beginning," answered Chickton. "At present it must suffice to say that she with her husband is intriguing to gain possession of the fortune which of right belongs to your friend. I prevented the completion of her purpose ten years ago. That she has not relinquished her intention the disappearance of your friend sufficiently proves. She has not hesitated at the commission of crime, and I do not think that any fear of consequences will restrain her now. We must consider what can be done. Your friend must be saved at all hazards."

Further conversation was interrupted by Chowdar, who came rushing, as it were, downstairs, leaping over three or four at a time in his haste, regardless of danger, without his turban, his long, lank black hair streaming behind him like that of a woman, and evidencing the utmost excitement, alarm, and distress of mind.

"Amine!" he cried, in Hindostane. "Where is Amine?"

Chickton seized him by the arm, and exclaimed :

"Speak, man! Your life shall answer for hers! What has happened?"

Pointing upstairs, the Indian said :

"She is gone!"

Half maddened by this distressing announcement, Chickton released the Indian and bounded up the stairs, closely followed by Prescott and some others who had collected in the hall when the absence of Sydney was first discovered and commented upon.

The apartment in which Amine slept was empty,

### [SYDNEY'S ENCHANTMENT.]

so was that in which she had been left reclining on the luxurious cushions which formed her divan.

The cunningly prepared candles had burned themselves out, but the rays of the moon streamed in through the open window, rendering any other light unnecessary.

A door in the wall, which was that through the keyhole of which the two wretches in the next room had overheard what went on between Chickton and the mesmerist, was open. This unusual circumstance at once arrested Chickton's attention, and he explored the adjoining apartment, which was empty.

"Those people from the country—who are they? where are they?" exclaimed Prescott. "My friend's papers were stolen, he is gone, and your child is carried off. They must be impostors, and are in league with our enemies."

"They seemed most respectable people," remarked Mrs. Suarsby, feeling some doubts in her mind, however, respecting them.

Her husband went for a hammer and a screwdriver, by means of which he promptly opened the box which with the carpet bag and portmanteau comprised the luggage of the couple from Bedfordshire, and disclosed its weighty contents of stones and old iron.

When these articles met the landlord's astonished gaze he uttered a cry of rage, which was followed by a groan.

"This is the first time since I have been in business that I have been served such a trick," he exclaimed. "But they paid something in advance, so that I am no loser, which is a comfort. Well, if they are thieves anybody may be taken in, they were for all the world like country people."

"When did they go?" asked Prescott.

Nobody knew. Neither the people living in the hotel or the waiters had seen them leave, and for this reason—while the game at chess was progressing—Speedy and Selina had been engaged in carrying off the child, who soon became completely stupefied by the action of the drugs mixed in the composition of the candles.

Mike Gradder was waiting for them in the little room he had taken in the house at the extremity of the leads which connected the two buildings, and he made them a preconcerted signal which they lost no time in obeying.

Opening the door of communication between the two rooms, so as to avoid the necessity for going into the passage, which might lead to observation, they took up the sleeping body of the girl.

She was unconscious of what was taking place, and laid in their arms as helpless as a child. When the window was reached Speedy got out, and stand-

ing on the leads, received the girl from his wife, who quickly followed him.

Carefully skirting the skylight, the villains came near enough to Gradder to enable him to relieve them of their burden. They then climbed into the room and saw that Amine was deposited on a bed, and breathing gently.

"It will not be safe to take her out of the house until an hour or two past midnight," said Mike Gradder, "because there are some medical students living upstairs who come in very late. At two o'clock a cabman who is a friend of mine will be here to drive the girl to a little place on the Edgware road, where some people Ellis knows live, who are going to mind her."

"Then we can go out and get a glass of something before all the places shut up," exclaimed Speedy.

"Yes, you and I will go together. Selina stay and mind the child," replied Gradder.

"Thank you. Selina would rather not," answered the woman. "She has just as much right to go out as you, and she won't stop here to mind anything."

"Let her come," said Speedy; "the child is right enough."

Gradder made no farther opposition, and, locking the room door on the outside, they all three went to a tavern in the neighbourhood to pass away the time until the hour of two arrived, when they could take their helpless victim to a place of security.

In their hurry they forgot to close the window—an important omission, as will be seen presently. It is a remarkable thing that rogues of all descriptions almost invariably make some blunder, however trifling, which ultimately leads to their detection or the frustration of their enterprize. It is very rare for a rascal to lay his plans so well as to defy discovery at some time or other.

Chickton was not satisfied that Amine had really disappeared until he had thoroughly searched the apartments he occupied.

"My child gone," he said, in an agonized tone, "Solomon Tulise's grandson inveigled away! Oh! there is some terrible meaning in all this. It has been done to paralyze me and cripple my efforts. Idiot that I was! This woman has been working while I have been sleeping."

Suddenly Marville, the mesmerist, who had come up with the crowd—the people staying in the house, together with the waiters and others, having filled the room—approached the window and looked out, uttering a loud cry as he did so.

The leads we have already described, but we have not mentioned the fact that a small ladder, intended to be of use in case of an alarm of fire, was placed

against a wall, and conducted to a stone coping which ran along the edge of a gutter, at the extremity of the sloping tiles which formed the roof of the house into which Mike Gradder had conveyed her.

When Marcella looked out of this window Amine was climbing up the ladder. His cry brought Chickton to his side in an instant, and the mesmerist had the utmost difficulty in restraining him from jumping out and running after her.

"Not a word," he exclaimed, seeing the situation of affairs at a glance. "She is a somnambulist, and if you wake her she will be lost."

Motionless, scarcely daring to breathe, they watched her.

Somnambulism, as Chickton knew from what he had heard, produces the most extraordinary effects.

It is difficult to say how the state in which she was had been produced. Her organization was essentially different from that of others. She had been left asleep by Mike Gradder and his confederates; she was still asleep, but capable of moving and acting, though unconscious of what she was doing, for she had risen from the bed on which they had placed her, somewhat refreshed by the cool air which streamed in from the open window, through which she had climbed as carefully as if she were in the full possession of her proper senses.

In lying down on the cushions she had not undressed herself, so that she wore the light blue silk dress she had on all day, a thin black lace shawl being thrown around her shoulders and fastened at the neck by a brooch set with turquoise.

Chickton felt his hair bristle and erect itself as he watched her.

"Will she not fall?" he asked; "good heavens! it is terrible to stand here inactive, when some horrible calamity may overtake her!"

"The only chance she has of safety is to leave her perfectly free and un molested," answered Marcella, who was quite calm and self-possessed. "If we disturb her, she will become frightened, lose her footing, and tumble heavily on the leads."

In a few minutes Chickton lived an age.

When the girl reached the top of the ladder she drew herself up and walked along the narrow and perilous stone coping. One false step during her dangerous voyage would have precipitated her many feet below, and possibly have killed her on the spot or produced injuries which would have rendered her recovery impossible.

She traversed the coping as if able to see whither she was going; once she blundered at an inequality, and sank on one knee, but, recovering herself, she continued on her way.

Chickton could bear no more.

He turned his head on one side, and, sobbing like a child, said:

"Tell me if she is dead. I cannot bear to look at her."

The house was square, and the stone coping ran all round it, so when she reached the corner she turned and went on. Being lost to sight, every one pushed against the window and craned his or her neck to get a better view of the strange spectacle which presented itself; but all made way with a respectful look for the pale and trembling man who feared that the girl so dear to him was about to perish. He sank on a chair and buried his face in his hands, the Indian being by his side.

Chowdar, from his height, could see over the heads of the others, and he kept his master informed of what went on.

Suddenly he became silent. It was when Amine rounded the corner. Fearful that some catastrophe had happened, Chickton said, in a hoarse voice:

"Is she dead?—tell me. I can hear the certainty better than suspense."

"I cannot see her," replied Chowdar; "she has gone round the house and is out of sight."

There was a terrible interval.

Whether Amine's foot had slipped and she had been precipitated from a dreadful height, which made strong men tremble to think of it, no one could tell.

All they could do was to wait with an intense anxiety until she reappeared or some one who had gone into the street to watch her came back with the sad intelligence that she was a crushed and mangled mass.

Finally five minutes elapsed, for the girl's progress was slow, and she moved one foot before and after the other without the slightest haste.

What Chickton suffered he never forgot during the remainder of his existence. His agitation was painful to witness, and though he dared not look up he waited, as one sentenced to death does for the arrival of the messenger with a reprieve, for some intimation from the Indian that Amine was safe.

"Here she is!" cried Chowdar as Amine reappeared. "She comes round the corner. Her eyes are open. She is nearing the ladder. She—yes—she places her feet upon it; she descends; she is coming to the

leads. The man with the evil eye is going to meet her; he gently guides her by touching her arm. She is coming towards us—she is here!"

Chickton uttered an hysterical cry.

"Saved! My darling is saved!" he exclaimed, wildly.

Pushing the bystanders right and left, he made his way to the window, through which willing hands were pulling Amine, who had been guided to her own house by Marcella.

As soon as he could throw his powerful, loving arms round her and strain her to his breast he did so, kissing her tenderly, calling her his angel, and thanking Heaven with his lips and in his heart. This convulsive petting caused her to wake from her strangeness, and, opening her eyes, she looked in a startled manner around her.

"Where am I?" she said, "and who are all these people? Is it you, dear papa? How ill you look!"

"My dear," replied Chickton, who was deadly pale and shivered like one with the ague. "I feel like a man who has passed through the valley of the shadow of death."

Chowdar took her up in his arms as if she had been a baby, and carried her to his bedroom, talking to her in Hindostanee, for he feared that if he left her in the midst of the crowd she would be pestered with an innumerable quantity of questions which would distress her mind and perhaps make her ill.

Chickton followed them, and the throng dispersed talk over the sensational act of somnambulism which they had just witnessed, congratulating themselves that no awful tragedy had resulted from it, though at one time such a thing might have been brought about by the deviation of the eighth of an inch from the path she pursued.

"Chowdar," said Chickton, "I do not blame you for what has happened, but I shall not hold you guiltless if any further harm come to Amine to-night. Guard her, as you would the apple of your eye."

"Give me your hand, sahib," replied the Indian.

Chickton extended it, and Chowdar, banding his hand, placed his master's hand on his neck in token of obedience and fidelity.

"Good night, dear papa. Good night, little papa," said Amine, using a term of endearment familiar to her. "I feel so tired and weak."

"Good night, my sweet. Heaven bless you, my pet lamb," replied Chickton, who loved her quite as much as if she had been his own daughter.

He kissed her and went downstairs. Chowdar left the room while Amine retired to rest. Then, masking the window, and putting some articles of furniture against it so that the least movement in that direction must be productive of a noise, he wrapped himself up in a shawl, and, leaving the bedroom door ajar, threw himself down on the mat like a faithful dog, presenting his body as a bar to entrance by anybody, and he placed a sharp, two-edged knife between his teeth, so that he should be armed at the slightest noise and ready for action.

Chickton, whose demeanour in seriousness corresponded with the importance of the occasion, went to the bar, behind which there was a little parlour in which Snarsby sat to smoke his pipe and his wife made up her accounts.

They were both inside. Mrs. Snarsby was taking money from the till, placing it in a cash box and entering the amount in her books. Her husband had his everlasting pipe in his mouth, and some beer in a tankard by his side.

"Can I come in?" said Chickton. "I wish very

particularly to speak to you, Mrs. Snarsby."

"By all means, sir," she replied, and her husband added:

"Of course you can. You are always welcome. Were not you brought up in the place where we lived servants together? Ah, those were brave days! Come in and call for what you like best. It will be a pleasure to the missis to wait upon you. Come in and take a seat by me. I hope you have got over the scene upstairs."

"I have, thank you, but the matter cannot rest here," answered Chickton as he sat down in the bar parlour and sipped some editor water and brandy which Mrs. Snarsby placed before him.

"What is wrong now?" inquired Snarsby.

"You will pardon me," continued Chickton, "but I feel sure that your wife knows more about the disappearance of Sydney than she has yet thought fit to tell us. Of course she will have a delicacy about the matter, though that ought to vanish when she hears what I have to say."

"What is that?" inquired Martha Snarsby, looking a little anxious.

"Solomon Tulse, who was our old master, left a large sum of money to son in India, who had offended him, but with whom he became reconciled shortly before his death. The son is I believe dead, but his grandson is the Mr. Sydney who has been living in your house. As you are Deaf people, you

will be well acquainted with Miss Grace Ebury, now Mrs. Ives, and she ought to know you. This lady has been scheming for years to get this money of which I have been speaking, and her spies have told her that he was living with you. She has taken her measures accordingly, making the poor young man fall in love with her, thinking her a single woman, and I ask you, Mrs. Snarsby, on your honour whether you have not been made a party to this intrigue?"

The woman coloured up, coughed, and hesitated before she replied.

"Why should you think so?" she asked.

"My reasons are obvious," rejoined Chickton. "Do not fence with the question. Mrs. Ives is a remarkably clever woman, and there is no disgrace in being cajoled by her. You will not be serving the ends of justice by refusing to tell us what you know, you will only be helping a bad, wicked, and unscrupulous woman to serve her own ends by remaining silent."

Snarsby hesitated.

"Come, Martha, cut with it, if you have anything to say," exclaimed her husband.

"I did not know that I was doing anything wrong," she said.

"We are aware of that. We acquit you of any sinister intention," Chickton hastened to reply.

"Well," continued the woman, with evident reluctance, "all I know is that the lady in question has given me money to tell her all about Sir Sydney's position and movements. I didn't think there was any harm in it. She has written me notes, and I have answered them. As to his going away to-night, that I know nothing of."

"Absolutely nothing?"

"Nothing whatever, sir, on my word," rejoined Mrs. Snarsby. "It quite took me by surprise."

"I believe you," exclaimed Chickton. "Now about those people from the country. Did you know their real character?"

"That is being too hard on me, Mr. Chickton," said Mrs. Snarsby, reddening this time with genuine indignation. "I keep a respectable house, and would not willingly harbour characters like those I can assure you."

"They were evidently sent by Mrs. Ives," said Chickton. "I can see it all, and the plot has been well laid. Those wretches have stolen Sydney's papers, so that when he came of age he should not know the particulars of the fortune he was entitled to. It was intended to carry off Amine, so that I should be occupied in searching for her, and unable to hunt for Sydney, also carried off, even if I discovered his identity. Oh! it was well planned, but I shall triumph yet."

"Martha, my dear, you've behaved badly in not letting me into the secret of the letters from Mrs. Ives," said Snarsby, gravely. "I'm not going to scold you, but you should have no secrets from me. Don't do it again, that's all."

This slender reproof acted more forcibly upon Mrs. Snarsby than any amount of loud language and fierce invective would have done.

She approached her husband, and, kissing him, said:

"I have been very foolish. I did not mean to be wicked. It will be a lesson to me. I thought I could use the money she gave me in buying dresses. I have not spent it yet. It is all in my work-box."

"Martha, my dear, what shall we do with that money?" inquired her husband, taking his pipe from his mouth and looking gravely at her.

"Give it to the poor. Put it in the box of an hospital," said Mrs. Snarsby, hastily.

"Right!" cried Snarsby, triumphantly, as he waved his pipe in the air; "I know Martha's heart was not bad. If she'd stuck to that money I should have frettet myself into my grave almost. No good would have come of it. She's a woman of business, and thought it was all grit that came to the mill, but she's honest, and when she finds there is something wrong about the money, she gives it up. I forgive her, and I am proud of her. I'll take that money to-morrow before anybody's up and slip it into the box of the Charing Cross Hospital, so that nobody shall see me. If I do a good thing out of charity I don't want it put in the newspapers."

"So you shall, dearest," said Mrs. Snarsby, "and there is the key of my work-box. You'll find it all there, and— and—I will never—never be so silly again."

"Bless you, Patty!" he rejoined. "Don't cry. It's all right now."

Nevertheless Mrs. Snarsby sat down, and did cry for several minutes, and when the storm was over, she felt better, and joined her husband in a little hot gin-and-water, which inclined her to talk, and she gave Chickton a full and circumstantial history of all her dealings with Grace, which he found rather tedious, as he was already acquainted with the leading circumstances.

"Where do you think they have taken him, sir?" asked Snarsby, referring to Sydney.

"I can only guess," rejoined Chickton, "and my idea is that Grace would go down to Sea View, which is her husband's property. The strange man ordered the cab to drive to the South Eastern Station, and everything points in that direction."

"Can't your mesmerist find out for you?" continued Snarsby.

"I don't know, but I intend to try him to-morrow, and if there is any reliance to be placed upon his boasted science, he shall, through Amine, give me information respecting Sydney, which will place me so quickly on his track that I shall be up with his abductors before they can do me any harm; now good night. I am sorry if I have caused your wife any uneasiness."

"Don't mention it, sir," rejoined Martha. "You have taken a great load off my heart and my mind, for I never had a secret from my husband before, and I never will again."

Snarsby nodded his head approvingly.

Chickton shook hands with both of them, and went upstairs to decide the best means of rescuing Sydney from his enemies.

#### CHAPTER XXII.

If music be the food of love, play on,  
Give me excess of it; that, surfeiting,  
The appetite may sicken, and so die.—  
That strain again;—it had a dying fall:  
Oh, it came o'er my ear like the sweet South,  
That breathes upon a bank of violets,  
Stealing and giving odour.

*Tide of the Night.*

SEA VIEW has not been much altered since we last saw it. The house looks more desolate, and seems more inclined to fall into decay and its ancient walls to crumble into dust. The place is deserted, and lacks the life and activity which surrounded it when Solomon Tulse was alive, for since it came into the possession of Cecil Ives only one old woman named Madge has lived in it, and she occupies an out-house.

Madge is half deaf, and more than half blind. Old age tells sorely upon her, but she remembers her old master and reveres his memory.

The dog Pluto is still in a kennel, but he too is old, and by his lazy demeanour shows the ravages of time and his indifference to everything except a bone.

The sea birds and the land birds have built their nests in nooks and crannies about the old house, and their little colonies revel in their undisturbed security. The gulls sweep in eccentric circles over the towers, and the starlings chatter as if they were the hereditary owners of the place.

It was late at night when Sydney arrived here in the company of Ellis, who hastily improvised a bed for him, and saw him retire to rest, the young man having childlike faith in the honour and sincerity of his guide.

The next day Ellis summoned him to breakfast and waited upon him as his servant.

"It is the lady's wish, sir," he exclaimed, "that you will not go out, as she does not care about the people of the country side seeing you. There is only one old woman in the house besides ourselves, and she is nearly blind and deaf."

"Certainly," rejoined Sydney. "I did not come here to see the country. I will not stir out of this room. When may I expect the—lady?"

"In the afternoon. I am not at liberty to say anything more, or to explain her reason for bringing you down here. You will doubtless learn all that from her own lips."

"Very well," said Sydney. "You can leave me, and let me know instantly of her arrival."

Ellis bowed respectfully and retired.

The room in which Sydney found himself was one of those old-fashioned apartments with a large fireplace and dogs on the hearth in place of a grate. The heat did not permit of a fire. The walls were panelled with oak, black with age and curiously carved. The windows, two in number, were deeply embayed, and from them one could look upon the sea, which was studded with sailing vessels and steamers going to or coming from all parts of the world, bringing their cargoes to or taking them from that enormous centre of commerce, London.

He did not think that he had done a rash and foolish thing—he did not consider the circumstances likely to follow his indiscreet act.

What man in love ever does think of the consequences? His mind was solely occupied with thoughts of Grace, wondering what her intentions were, and knowing only that he loved her with a passion that was the very quintessence of madness.

What man or woman does not look back with pleasure to a first love? There is nothing like it in existence for intensity of feeling and dreamy happiness.

At last the long, weary hours of that seemingly everlasting morning wore away, and Ellis, opening

the door, ushered in Grace Ives, immediately after which he discreetly retired.

She looked ravishingly beautiful in her summer costume, and, having taken the precaution to remove all traces of travel, was as fresh and beautiful as a mermaid just risen from the sea in the first golden beams of the morning sun.

Flying to her, she allowed him to grasp her hand, while she kissed him on the forehead, saying:

"My darling one! How kind of you to obey me without a murmur!"

"Oh!" he answered, in a tremulous voice, "how could I refuse you anything?"

"But you know nothing of me."

"What do I want to know, except that you love me, or you would not have brought me here?"

Grace shivered as if with fear.

"Why do you tremble?" he asked, with great concern.

"Because I am afraid," she replied, "that I have acted very boldly, but my love makes me dare everything. I don't know what you may have heard of me. You shall be told the truth, however, at once. I am a single woman, and, as you may guess, of a romantic disposition. It pleased me at first to witness your infatuation. Every woman must be pleased by the compliment a man pays her in falling in love with her. My heart at length compassionated your sufferings, and I have ended by loving you. Still, what must you think of me for acting in such an unmaidly manner as I have done?"

"Think of you?—that you are an angel!" he exclaimed, with enthusiasm.

"Oh, no; there are no angels now!" she said, with a sad smile. "You will find that I have my faults; but I have not yet told you all. This house is my father's property, and I have brought you here because we never live here, and the place is quiet and private. My father wishes me to marry a very rich man, and I have refused. I am constantly watched, and my fear is that I shall be followed and we shall be torn from one another and separated for ever."

A sharp pang shot through Sydney's heart.

"Let us be married at once. There must be a church and a clergyman near here!" he exclaimed.

Grace smiled again—in this time pityingly.

"My poor, dear, impetuous boy!" she exclaimed, "we cannot arrange our union so hurriedly as you wish. If we were married in Deal it would be the conversation of the town. The clergyman knows me; he would communicate with my father, and everything would be stopped."

"What then are we to do?" he asked, in despair.

"You shall hear. I am about to tell my servant, Ellis, who conducted you here, to obtain a licence in a small parish a few miles off, and in a day or two we will go thither and be married."

"But until then—"

"Ah, there is the danger!" she answered, with the same startled look as before. "If my father were to discover that I had come to Sea View—so this house is called—he would follow instantly, and I should be taken back to town, and married by force to the rich man he has chosen as my husband, a man whom I hate."

It was not her father whom she feared, for she had none, as the reader knows—it was Chickton, who she knew would pursue her with the relentless energy of an avenging fate.

"You are my heaven—my guide—you must also be my protectress," Sydney said.

"How? What can I do? My father will kill you if—"

"Cannot you hide me somewhere? In this old house there must be some dungeon, or some remote cellar, where you could place me, and we need not then fear discovery. When all your arrangements for our marriage are complete I can emerge from my place of security."

"Are you not afraid to be alone?"

"I? No, indeed! I should like to be by myself for awhile, to think over my happiness. I cannot realize all my joy; I have not dared to hope for such felicity. When I first saw you casually at the theatre I loved you, but I fancied myself doomed to live a hopeless life, for you seemed so much above me and so much more beautiful and good than I deserved for a wife that I scarcely dared to think of you as my own; now that all my dreams of bliss are about to be fulfilled it is too much for me; my brain reels!"

"Dear child!" said Grace, holding his hands in hers and looking into his innocent, ingenuous face in a way which brought a vivid flush to his cheeks.

Presently she resumed, taking a seat, and motioning him to another by her side on an old-fashioned sofa:

"Yours is a good idea. I am acquainted with some of the secrets of this house. It was built in the days of civil war, when both Roundheads and Royalists found it convenient to lay in hiding. Below our feet, in the depths of the earth, is a little room, comfortably

furnished, though the appointments are old and dusty. The absence of complete ventilation is the only thing against it, but I think you could exist there for a day or two. At all events you might try it for a time, and, as you will be visited by me, you can change your hiding-place if it be necessary. I have heard that an ancestor of mine lived there day and night for more than a month when pursued by the rebel troops. Sometimes at night he came out to take the air in the yard you may have seen as you came through a passage to this room."

"Can we gain access to this subterranean room?"

"Oh, yes. Entrance is gained by a curious mechanical arrangement. Would you like to see it in work?"

"Very much," replied Sydney.

"Follow me!" said Grace, approaching the wall near the chimney.

He was by her side as if he had been her shadow. She passed her hand along the wainscoting until she came to a knob, or excrescence, scarcely visible without close inspection. It was not polished by use, and it looked like what is called "a knot in the wood."

Immediately she had pressed this with her delicate fingers the floor, which was of polished oak and uncarpeted, began to tremble under their feet, and the part on which they were standing slowly descended.

She held him by the hand to steady him; he saw that she held a taper in her hand, which she lighted by striking a match, thus disclosing the depths into which they were sinking.

After descending for about ten or twelve seconds the trap-work stopped, and they found themselves in a chamber having no opening but that through which they had come.

They stepped on one side, and the flooring instantly reassembled and resumed its former position, leaving them buried in the earth.

Everything that could be discerned was comfortably arranged in this little room. There were candles, books, wine, and other things which indicated preparation on the part of Ellis during the night, but the young man was too much preoccupied to think of this, even if he noticed it.

"What an agreeable prison!" he exclaimed.

"Is it not? But how do you think we are to get out?" she asked, smiling.

"I cannot tell. You are with me, and if we never reached the outer air again I could find pleasure in dying with you!" he said, with a loving look.

"We will do better than that; we will live to enjoy each other's society," answered Grace. "My father will forgive me when he knows we are married and that he can do nothing in the matter. If not it does not matter, for I have money of my own on which we can live, and you can work."

"Will I not?" he cried, earnestly. "Night and day I will labour for you, my adored one!"

Her hand searched the wall, which was hung with tapestry, and without much difficulty she discovered another spring, resembling the first, and the flooring from the upper chamber descended as before.

They stood upon it, and Grace said:

"At present we need not hide you. Dinner is ready, and, though you will say it is impudent and unromantic, yet I am very hungry."

They ascended again, and were soon in the dining-room.

The floor resumed its usual position, and Sydney could scarcely believe that he had been actually in the dungeon—if so it may be called—which existed beneath their feet.

It was an idle moment that Grace had discovered this hiding-place.

The principal reason which Cecil Ives had in buying the property of Solomon Tulse was this:—He thought, as many others did, that the old man was a miser and that he had money concealed on the premises.

When Cecil purchased Sea View he made a close examination of the house, and found nothing. But Grace, who was of a more inquisitive turn of mind, hunted everywhere, and, at last, in a cupboard, hidden away amidst a mass of rubbish, she unearthed a plan of the place, taken during the reign of Charles the First, and in it a spot was assigned to this strange oubliette which we have described. A little farther search enabled her to find the means of access to it, and she did not scruple to turn it to account in her desperate efforts to obtain the property which had been left by Solomon Tulse to his son and his heirs.

Grace dined alone with Sydney, and a dinner, perfect in its excellence, was served up—Madge, in spite of her infirmities, being a good cook and knowing how to make the most of the materials with which she was provided by Ellis, who had gone into Deauville to buy all the luxuries in season that he could obtain.

Ravished by the excellence of the repast and the kindness of his hostess, Sydney's spirits rose, and he talked of his future prospects.

"You have been candid, dear Grace," he said—"I must call you by your Christian name—you have told me all about yourself, and you must now hear who I am and what I have to expect in the future."

"Is that the reward of high art?" she replied, with a smile, "for you must know that I believe in your talent and firmly expect you will have an excellent future. You see I am not altogether disinterested in returning your love. It has always been my dearest wish to be the wife of a celebrated man—a man whose name is in everybody's mouth, and as I have no chance of obtaining fame in my own person I should like to shine by the reflected light of one who, like yourself, must become famous by industry, which always aids genius."

Sydney's face flushed with pleasure.

"I feel that nothing could prevent me from climbing to the top of the ladder," he replied, "encouraged by you. It is so delightful for a young man to be believed in. You seem to know how arduous the path is by which a man must achieve success, and it is incalculable how valuable it is to him to have a fond, kind, and loving assistant, who bids him look onward and anticipate ultimate success."

"That is what it shall be my pleasant task to do, dear Sydney; but yet you have not told me of yourself, this woman had the hypocrisy to reply.

"Pardon me. I will supply the omission," answered Sydney.

He proceeded to tell her how he and his father and mother had been wrecked, how he and his mother were saved, his father supposed to be lost and that his mother was now mad in an asylum in Hampshire; how he had been led to expect a fortune when he came of age, according to his father's last words, and how he was to examine some papers given him by his father when he was twenty-one, which desirable event would take place within a few days.

Grace smiled inwardly as she thought that the very documents of which he was speaking were by this time in the possession of her agent, and that they would soon be in her own.

"I love you for yourself," she answered, "for your art, for your genius. What is wealth to me? I have sighed for a husband of refinement and exalted ideas. I would not marry a boor if he had a hundred thousand a year, yet I can find happiness with you who have nothing."

"It is because you have a soul which pants for a realization of the beautiful that you would render your state as ethereal as this earth will permit. It will be my business to try and realize your ideal," he rejoined, his face breathing the enthusiasm of the true artist.

"You shall make my face the model for your pictures," continued Grace, "and if you become celebrated my features will descend to all posterity! Would you like me to be your model, Sydney?"

"If I searched the wide world through I could not find one more congenial, more lovely, more classically beautiful," answered Sydney.

There was a pause, which Grace broke by saying:

"Do you smoke. If so you must do so before you seek your prison. The air there will stifle you if impregnated with tobacco."

"I believe smoking is a habit—I will not call it a vice—peculiar to most literary men and artists," answered Sydney, "and I plead guilty to a fondness for a pipe."

Grace rang the bell and Ellis placed pipes and tobacco upon the table.

"I am fatigued with my journey; you will forgive me if I go to my room for a little while," she said.

"Pray do not let me by my presence place any restraint upon your actions," replied Sydney.

"My servant will give me notice of the approach of any one," she went on, "and you can be lowered into your temporary prison in a moment, though it is not worth while to incarcerate you until nightfall. I have a good start, even if my father or his spies should discover my whereabouts—my flight must have been known to them by this time—and I do not think it likely that any pursuers could get here until nightfall."

"Do with me as you will," replied Sydney, "I feel like one of those submissive slaves in the 'Arabian Nights,' whose only care was to please their mistress and do all that she told them."

"Have I then such absolute power over you?"

"You have, indeed."

She kissed him again and retired, leaving him the happiest of men.

Instead of going to her own room to rest, as she had led him to believe she would—she sought Ellis, who was in a room adjoining.

"Well," said he, in a familiar tone, "Is he caged already?"

"No, but he will be whenever I choose. As soon as it is dark he will descend into the prison I have chosen for him," she answered, coldly.

"And for ever?"

She bowed her head and said:

"You are severe."

"Am I not logical also?" he asked.

"How so?"

"The young fellow and I arrived here at night. No one saw us come. You and I could leave to-morrow morning early, and who is to know anything about the third one?"

By "third one" he meant Sydney.

"You mean that we should leave the poor wretch to die of hunger and thirst below?"

"Why not?"

Grace shrugged her shoulders.

"Your idea is not bad," she said. "But before putting it into execution one must take several things into consideration."

"Among them—"

"First of all, are the walls thick enough to prevent Chickton, or any one who may be on our track, from hearing his cries?"

"Of that I am sure. There is no one in the house but old Madge, and she is three parts deaf. If you hesitate at what I suggest, what did you bring the man here for at all?"

"To prevent him and Chickton meeting. That is intelligible enough."

"Do you mean to let him go?" asked Ellis, almost angrily.

"I can't tell yet. I do not know what to do. I must have time to think, and I shall in a great measure be guided by circumstances."

"I have an interest in this affair, and I should have a voice in the arrangement of its details," exclaimed Ellis. "Dalton, the pilot, is dead, Ponder is out of the question; you, I, and your husband, are the only ones now in the secret of Solomon Tuluse's fortune. It is understood between us, and has been all along, that I shall participate in whatever booty we can get hold of. Therefore I have a right to speak out and see that you do not make a mistake at a critical moment."

"That is enough for this evening. I cannot be bothered to-night with your suggestions; talk to me to-morrow," Grace replied.

"Very well; but to-morrow we must have a clear understanding. If you are foolish I must be master and take the lead."

It was with some insolence that this speech was delivered, and Grace followed him with the eye of a murderer.

At that moment she could have killed him, but she was so perfect a mistress of her face and her passions that he did not suspect for a moment what was passing in her mind.

When alone she threw herself back and became at once plunged into deep thought.

After a time she rose and went to a piano which stood in a corner of the room, and, being an accomplished musician, sang and played with exquisite pathos.

Sydney listened entranced, and at last came to the door of the room and gazed upon her as if she had been a seraph, uttering divine sounds which had never charmed mortal ear before.

(To be continued.)

**AN INTREPID VOYAGER.**—The ice on the Seine is frozen in huge lumps, which drift slowly along with the tide. On Sunday, December 9th, a man laid a wager that he would cross over from the Louvre to the Palais Mazarin. He wore long wicker skates, with which he managed to step from one block of ice to the other, a work of great danger, as the blocks of ice gave way with his weight. He won the wager, but was hauled off, wet and dripping as he was, to the police office for transgressing the rules of the river.

**WARM BLOOD IN COLD WEATHER.**—We have no sympathy with the sluggard who imagines himself half frozen to death as soon as the cold weather sets in. Stir yourself, and keep your blood moving. Exercise is an excellent fire. There is something unmanly in the spirit which shrinks from the warfare by which we obtain the mastery over the elements. The woodchuck lies dormant in his burrow during the winter; but his example is not one for a man to imitate. Energy and activity convert the cold weather into a luxury.

**HOW TO ACQUIRE A GOOD MEMORY.**—We read too much and think about what we read too little; the consequence is that most of the people we meet know something, in a superficial way, about almost everything. Not a tenth part of what is read is remembered for a month after the book or newspaper is laid aside. Daniel Webster, who had a rich store of information on almost every subject of general interest, said that it had been his habit for years to reflect for a short time on whatever he read, and so fix the thoughts and ideas worth remembering in his

mind. Any one who does this will be surprised to find how retentive his memory will become, or how long after reading an interesting article the best portions of it will remain with him.

## THE KING OF THE TRAPPERS.

### CHAPTER XI.

As long as Philip Lee and Maggie Grey fancied that their old and true friend remained awake they sat at a respectful distance and talked only in the most commonplace manner of the events of the previous night—he filling in the tale of which Old Moscow had only sketched the outline. But that soon grew too cold for hearts like theirs, and Lee drew nearer to her side and in low, whispered words of passion told of the desires of his soul—told of the old, sweet story that has been repeated so many thousands of times.

"Maggie," he said, in a straightforward, manly way, and she made no resistance against the strong arm that crept around her waist, "Maggie, from the first moment I saw you I loved you."

"And I you, Philip," she replied, as honestly, though blushing at her boldness.

"Yet it might have taken a long time for me to tell it if you had remained safe. But somehow the scenes through which we have passed have made me bold."

"And what girl would not love a man who had passed through so much for her sake?" she asked, earnestly.

"It is no more than Old Moscow or I would have done for any one in your situation, and I didn't think of myself, but only of your sweet face."

"And I of you, Philip dear. When the wolves were the thickest and fiercest around me, and I expected every moment would be my last, I couldn't help thinking of and praying for you, and if I had died I believe your name would have been the last word upon my lips."

"It was terrible for one so young, and a girl, too, and I don't well see how you could love a fellow like me with no education to recommend him—and—"

"Learning doesn't make the man," she answered proudly, "and I wouldn't have you changed for all the world."

The honest confession was repaid in true lover's fashion, and for a long time their conversation ran in the same channel, unbroken only as the young trapper cautiously raised his head occasionally above the tall grass and sent his eagle eye over every part of the surrounding country.

But, as their reserve was broken down, they talked more freely and told each other all their hopes and fears, the vigilance of their caution being relaxed meanwhile, and for many minutes an enemy might have remained in plain sight undiscovered.

But after a time of longer and sweeter endearments than usual he fancied he saw something that might bethink danger. What it was he could not then determine.

Far away upon the prairie were black spots that he had not noticed before. They might be birds, or beasts, or simply stones, but until something more tangible was to be seen he would not disturb either the girl or his male companion.

Yet he could not blind the eyes of a newly awakened love. Even as he resumed his seat Maggie saw at a glance that something was wrong, and exclaimed, in alarm:

"Philip, what have you seen? Are the Indians coming?"

"No, Maggie, at least I don't think they are," he replied, soothingly.

"But you have seen something. Your face tells me that."

"I don't know that I have discovered anything which wasn't there before."

"Had we not better call Old Moscow?"

"Not yet."

"At least let me look."

He took hold of her hand and guided her to where she could obtain a clear view, and they sat silently watching for some time.

Then the same opinion found expression at the same instant from their lips:

"Horses!"

Soon the horses drew so near that Philip could decide that the riders were Indians, and in a moment afterwards they separated, and some rode swiftly round to the other side of the hill.

"Do not stir for your life," he whispered to the girl, "or make the slightest noise. I will creep round and watch them. If there be any danger of their coming here I will let you know and wake up Old Moscow. But I think there isn't."

With scarcely the moving of a reed he crept away, and she bowed her head and laid as low to the ground as possible—almost held her breath. But she had not been long in that position before a sharp, hissing sound attracted her attention, and turning quickly she saw a large rattlesnake.

The serpent had drawn its loathsome length from one of the many holes in the vicinity, and had approached very near, apparently without being aware of her presence. But the instant it saw her it threw itself into a massive coil, with upraised head, fire-flashing eyes, spitefully darting tongue, and rapidly vibrating tail. What should she do?

A number of the Indians had drawn up their horses and were eagerly looking up at the high land upon which she lay concealed—Old Moscow was sleeping at a distance, and her lover had gone she knew not whither. If she raised up or called for help it would give the Indians notice of her presence, and if she remained it would be to meet death in the most horrid form. Even when she had faced the pack of howling wolves in the darkness her nerves had not been so terribly tried. But there was no time for thought, and brave as she had shown herself she felt the cold sweat standing upon her forehead and oozing out through every pore of her skin.

The aspect of the snake was constantly becoming more threatening. Its lidless eyes flashed and burned like living coals—its neck became more rigid—the scales shone more and more like burnished gold and jet—its head was thrust forward—its mouth more open and its rattles rang more swiftly and sharply!

The poor girl dared not raise up or attempt to flee—dared not crawl away—dared not even turn over. The Indians that were watching from below would at once detect the sudden disturbance of the grass, and rush to learn the cause.

She drew back as far as possible, and called, in the lowest voice, to Old Moscow—to her lover—but there was no answer save the angry hiss of the serpent as it uncloaked with lightning rapidity—drew nearer, and again prepared itself for battle—with every fold in its body convulsed with fury. She could have put out her hand and touched it—it was almost paralyzed with fear—fascinated by the changing light that flashed from scales and eyes.

What should she do? The answer was forced upon her. With the swiftness of thought the head of the monster was flung forward—it fastened itself upon her arm.

Human nature burst through all restraints, and Maggie Grey's screams could have been heard for miles!

### CHAPTER XII.

THERE are no words powerful enough to paint the rage and disappointment of the chief of the Sioux when the discovery was made as to how he had been tricked and robbed of his prisoners.

It was a master, however, in which all the tribe were deeply interested, though none cared for his particular passion for the girl, and much as it chafed him he was forced to call a council of braves, and sit as a stone while they slowly smoked and deliberated upon what was best to be done.

Such things among the red-men are not speedily accomplished. More than one hour passed, and no conclusion was arrived at. That the fugitives must be followed was certain, but there were many opinions as to the best way.

First, however, they must learn if there were any truth in the report of the death of the medicine man, and, if so, whether the cave had not been used as a hiding-place in the belief that no one would dare to venture into it.

To that end a large body of the younger men and runners was despatched, for even after all they had found out it would have been difficult to persuade any one to go alone.

But as soon as the fact of their errand became known they were followed by a crowd, very many even of the braves deserting the council fire to gratify their curiosity.

Yet, when they drew near, and saw the old man seated as he had been upon the previous evening, with his back against the altar, they hesitated. They called aloud, but he answered not—they crept nearer, and saw that he did not stir—shouted more loudly, and at length ventured up the sides—some even gaining a place upon the top of the rock.

It was their last venture! There was a slight whizzing noise, a little puff of smoke, then a sound like thunder, and men and rocks were whirled aloft in commingled confusion.

The long-hidden store of powder the medicine man had from time to time stolen had suddenly exploded, and its fatal effects could be seen upon every side.

The warriors heard it, deserted the council fire, and rushed thither to behold a mass of mangled and burned wretches and scorched fragments of flesh scattered about in every direction, and for a time all thought of revenge was lost in mourning.

But the grief that arose upon every side from those who had lost friends aroused them from their lethargy. Something must be done to appease the wrath of the Great Spirit, and that could only be by torture and bloodshed, and many of the red-men

contented strongly that if they again captured the fugitives not one of the number should be spared, but that all should share the same fate. To this Horse Shoe would not listen. He asserted, and with truth, that as his wife the girl would pass through more of mental if not physical torture than if given to the knife and the flames, and so hot grew the discussion that a battle would have been fought had not one of the elders poured oil upon the troubled waters by saying, with a touch of grim humour:

"The warriors of the Dacotahs are quarrelling like little children about something they have not got. Had they not better wait until the white squaw is again in their power before they brawl of what shall be done with her?"

All saw the sense of his remark, and, selecting a number from the most active of the warriors, Horse Shoe divided them into two parties, one on foot to go through the valley, and the other, headed by himself, to take their horses and ride swiftly through the wood and prairie until they should meet at the extreme end of the low land. Then, if baffled, further plans could be decided upon.

The mounted men were the first to arrive at the place of rendezvous. They rode slowly forward, not in the least suspecting that those eagerly sought were very near. The point before them was the very last place they would have dreamed the fugitives would select for camping; it was too much exposed for concealment. But in order to gain the most speedy intelligence of their comrades, who were exploring the valley, a portion passed to the opposite side.

Waiting for a time, those that remained were about to ride away, and in an instant more would have disappeared had not the terrible screams of the frantic girl rang upon their ears. Then all was the wildest commotion.

"It is the voice of the pale squaw," said the chief, and, at a motion of his hand, every horse was ridden into cover, and every rider dismounted.

Again and again the wild screams rang over the prairie, and the quick ears of the warriors could distinguish that they were caused by terror.

Could the fair fugitive be alone and surrounded by some unknown danger?

They listened, as such men only can listen, as the cry for help burst forth yet again, then all was still as the grave.

Puzzled to know what such a thing could mean, they remained yet motionless for a time; then they began to crawl together and consult. Treacherous themselves, they were constantly upon the look-out for it in others, and it might well be that the late captives had met a party of their friends, and that the girl had been used as a decoy.

But the impetuous disposition of Horse Shoe, his passionate longing to have the girl again in his power, would not admit of long delay, and, whispering to his followers, they began to creep like so many serpents in all directions, calculating to surround that which might be concealed above, and make them an easy prey.

"Shoot down the pale-faces—chop them into a thousand pieces, but spare the young squaw," was the command of the chief, and never were men more prepared for acts of the most diabolical brutality.

(To be continued.)

**SPARROWS FOR MONTREAL.**—A Canadian paper reports the arrival of a supply of English sparrows for Montreal. They were to be set at liberty in the French Square, the Seminary Gardens, and the Mount Royal Cemetery. There are several hundreds of them; a few have died. They had a long and stormy passage of sixteen days, but on the whole they seem to have stood it remarkably well, and are very lively. The question as to whether they can endure the severity of a Canadian winter has been already decided. A colony of these birds, brought from England, has lived and prospered at Quebec for the last ten years.

**A KING IN A CROWD.**—The King of the Belgians was in the midst of the crowd in Brussels lately during one of the most energetic demonstrations of the people against the late Ministry. It appears that his Majesty was returning in the evening to the Palace of Laeken, and having been informed that it would be a matter of great difficulty to reach the palace in his carriage, owing to the dense crowd in the street, the king dismounted, and mingled in the crowd without attracting notice. Leopold II. was thus enabled to form, from personal observation, a tolerably accurate estimate of the character and extent of the popular feeling in his capital. It was not without some difficulty that he made his way through the crowds, and ultimately was enabled to reach the palace at a time which might be called an interval between two demonstrations.

**AN INEXORABLE VALET.**—Felix was the faithful but somewhat tyrannical valet of the late Baron Rothschild. It was his business to dress his master, and he did not allow his judgment upon matters of the toilet to be called in question. "What sort of an overcoat is that, Felix?" asked the baron one morning. "That which monsieur le baron will put on to-day," answered Felix. "But that which I wore yesterday pleases me much better." "That may be, but monsieur le baron does not know that the weather has changed." "That does not matter, I would rather have the other." "But monsieur le baron will put this on," and, laughingly, M. Rothschild had to put on the coat Felix had brought him.

### TOO LATE.

"THAT boy has never caused me a moment's sorrow or an anxious thought since his baby days," said a friend to me a year ago, pointing to a lad of about eighteen years, who, with several others, was playing a game of ball. His laugh was the loudest, the merriest of all. The father's remark made me particularly attentive to the boy. I watched him with great interest. His blue eyes were like a child's—full of fun, clear, and honest. The brown hair was thrown back from a forehead high, broad, and smooth. These were his best features, for he was not handsome—not nearly so handsome as others around him.

The game was over; a few moments after the youth joined us, and was presented to me, then he turned again to his father and said:

"I am going home with one of the boys, if you do not wish me to remain here."

"Certainly; go, my boy. Will Julian go too?"

"I do not know, sir. Can I do anything for you first?"

"Thank you; no, my son."

Placing his hand caressingly on him, the father smiled his boy away.

"We call him Benny. When I gave him the name of Benjamin the folks did not like the old-fashioned patronymic. But I did not mind; I insisted on it. And when he was baptized I prayed that he might be a good man—a comfort to our old age. Ay, and how fully Heaven has answered my prayer! My good boy, Benjamin! Son of my right hand!"

"Your only one?" I asked.

"No. Oh no; there is one other—Julian."

"And he?"

"Is not like Benny. Oh, no! But is the apple of his mother's eye—her darling!" answered the father, with a grave face.

"Then to his mother he is surely a comfort, or she would not love him thus."

"He loves her, in his way. But, oh, do you not know mothers often love those most who are the most unworthy—that cause them the greatest sorrow?"

I did know, but cared not to admit it.

"There he is."

I followed the direction of the father's gaze, and saw, seated under a tree not far distant, a youth who looked older than Benny.

"How handsome!" I exclaimed.

He was the handsomest youth I had ever seen. A forehead high and smooth—not broad and full like his brother's—from which the hair was thrown back in black, silken waves. Beautiful, classical features, and eyes that should have been a girl's—large, dark, and soft; beautiful, deceiving eyes!

"How very, very handsome!" I repeated, and thought, "Wilful, wayward, and wicked, I fear."

"He is handsome, and I fear that will be a source of trouble to us. For that fatal gift he has been potted, caressed, and humoured in every whim, while Benny, though older by two years, comes off always second best, except in his father's heart," my friend said; and, looking again on his handsome boy, he added:

"Yet he is affectionate."

Then a look came into his eyes full of regret, followed by another anxious and fearful.

Friends joining us then, the conversation ceased, and I saw no more of the boys for many months. They returned to college. Occasionally I met my friend, their father; but the subject was never re-mentioned. It was painful to speak of it, I knew, and therefore avoided it.

I was on the eve of going to visit some relatives in the town where these youths were pursuing their studies. I told my friend of my proposed visit, and he begged me to go and see his boys.

I promised, and did so. This was the second time I had seen them. This occasion was impressed more forcibly on my mind than the other, and my heart was filled with great anxiety—dark forebodings.

I carried with me an invitation from my sister for the boys to attend an entertainment that evening. Benny seemed much pleased, and readily accepted the invitation.

Julian declined, urging in excuse a previous engagement.

He had changed much in the past months, and his

looks told plainly of late hours and sleepless nights, not spent in study. His beautiful eyes were no longer clear, and in them I saw the traces of the wine-cup.

"Do come, Jule. As we have a holiday this afternoon you can get excused, and be with us in the evening. Do," pleaded Benny.

"No; impossible," answered Julian, positively.

"Whom is your engagement with, Jule?"

The youth must surely have been off his guard, for the reply, "Fred Marvel" caused Benny to turn pale and compress his lips. Drawing his brother a little apart, he spoke low but earnestly—besechingly to him. I own I strained every nerve to hear, for I was deeply interested in the handsome youth.

"Julian, oh, do not go with him to-night! I know whether he will take you. Think of mother and father! Spare their hearts this additional blow!"

"I've promised, and a man of honour cannot break his word."

"Oh, brother, have you forgotten the promise made to the loved ones at home? Think particularly of our mother—your mother, for you are more to her than I—think of her, and come with me," pleaded Benny.

"Oh, stop! You are such an old fogey, Ben! What is the harm of seeing a little of the world? The 'old man' will never know it, and neither will mother. So stop preaching and go on, you old croaker!"

"Julian, do not speak of father so. Oh, I would give everything I have in the world to keep you away from there. Jule, you want my horse; you may have Oward, if you'll come with me."

"Oh, pshaw! Indeed I cannot. Goon. Besides, mother has promised to buy 'Lady Fair' for me when I go home."

"Mother keeps her promises to her son, and he breaks his to her; and will, I fear, in time break her heart," said Benny, sadly.

"Go on; if you don't I'll get angry."

My heart was aching for the good son, the earnest, anxious brother.

As he rejoined me he looked so sad that I referred to the conversation with his brother which I had overheard, and said:

"Perhaps your fears are groundless?"

"No, no; he goes with a gambler to-night."

His voice was trembling so that he could scarcely speak, and I hastened to draw his thoughts away, if possible.

Once more I stood beside the youths. A week after, when I returned home I was greeted with the sad tidings of the extreme illness of Mrs. Aylmer, Benny and Julian's mother.

"Some terrible shock she has experienced, we cannot imagine what. The servants say she received a letter, in Mr. Aylmer's absence, intended for him. She opened and read it, and fell lifeless to the floor," I was told.

She had long been suffering with some trouble of the heart I knew.

The next morning I sent a servant to inquire how she was. He returned, announcing that Mrs. Aylmer had died a few moments previous to his reaching the house.

"Are the boys home?" I anxiously inquired.

"Mr. Benjamin is. He arrived by the early train."

"In time?"

"Yes, madam; a few hours previously."

Oh, where was Julian? Why could not the best loved have been with the dying mother?

In the afternoon I went to see the bereaved family. Oh, theirs was surely a terrible bereavement!

"It's hard to give the aged loved one up, but that wife and mother was young, gifted, and beautiful. Taken so soon, so fearfully!"

When I entered the room Benny stood beside the lovely form. He was very pale, but calm. No bursts of sorrow escaped his lips; no pangs of anguish rent his heart. No, no. As he spoke to me of her his lips quivered, and tears stole gently down, as once or twice he stooped to kiss first the brow then the hands of the beautiful dead.

Benjamin had no cause for such anguish as I witnessed later. No, his heart was free from regrets. Never by one act had he given sorrow to his mother's heart. He had received her parting blessing. On his head her hand had rested as she whispered:

"My good son! Heaven bless little Benny!"

"She seemed to be thinking of me in my baby days," he said when relating this to me.

While I still stood gazing on the confined face the door opened, and Julian rushed in, pale, terrified, and threw himself across his mother's corpse, laid his head on her cold bosom, and groaned:

"Oh, Heaven, this is too hard! Mother, mother, why, why, could not you have been spared? My beautiful, loving mother! Oh, I never dreamed of this! I never thought you could die! Mother, mother, I loved you; oh, I loved you! I would give

my very life to bring you back! Cannot you whisper one little word, 'Forgive?' If I could only recall the past, the dreadful past. Too late, too late!"

On and on he talked, praying for forgiveness. Then Benny drew him away, and in a few moments returned, saying:

"He has a more terrible blow yet to bear. I tried to spare him it, but father thinks it must be. Perhaps it may save him. I will tell you, for you will surely hear it. That night, you remember, when I pleaded with him to come with us, it was as I feared. He was there until a late hour, then carried out to the college, crazed with wine. I never dreamed that the Principal would send the dreadful news home, but he did. Mother opened the letter in father's absence. She read it, and her heart broke. We were telegraphed for to come home. Julian would not. He thought mother was not dangerously ill. She was looking for him when she sank into the last sleep.

Scarcely had Benjamin ceased when a groan came from the next room—a groan bitter, terrible, heart-rending—from the miserable youth. I think he will be saved; I hope so. But at what a fearful cost!

In the future he may grow great, for he is rarely gifted. He will be admired, flattered, courted. But will that stop the ceaseless regrets? Society, the world, may praise and render him homage. But, oh! what is all that to those words, "Heaven bless my good son," from a dying mother's lips? Yes, he would give all, everything, for those blessed words. Too late—too late! 'Tis past, the time for that! In another's ear, sinking to his very heart, will come in the future words worth all the world's proudest gifts:

"My good son—son of my right hand—Heaven bless thee, as thou hast me!" J. H. B.

#### DIALOGUE BETWEEN ECHO AND A GLUTTON.

The following lines, written in the year 1609, are said to have induced Butler to pursue the same idea in his "Hudibras."

*Echo: My stomach I do deify.*

*Echo: Fie!*

*Elat.: Who curbs his appetite's a fool.*

*Echo: Ah, fool!*

*Elat.: I do not like this abstinence.*

*Echo: Hence!*

*Elat.: My joy's a feast, my wish is wine.*

*Echo: Swine!*

*Elat.: We epicures are happy truly.*

*Echo: You lie!*

*Elat.: May I not, Echo, eat my fill?*

*Echo: Ill.*

*Elat.: Will it hurt me if I eat too much?*

*Echo: Much.*

*Elat.: Thou mock'st me, Nymph; I'll not believe it.*

*Echo: Believe it.*

*Elat.: Dost thou condemn, then, what I do?*

*Echo: I do.*

*Elat.: Is it that which brings infirmities?*

*Echo: It is.*

*Elat.: Then, sweetest temperance, I'll love thee.*

*Echo: I love thee!*

*Elat.: If all be true which thou dost tell*

To gluttony I bid farewell.

*Echo: Farewell!*

THE municipal council of Metz has just sent to Prince Bismarck a petition asking that the conscription in Lorraine may be delayed for five years; without that, says the document, the emigration is sure to assume such proportions that the country will be no more than a desert.

THE magnificent bridge at the entrance to the town of Orleans will be opened at the beginning of the new year. It is to replace the old one over which Joan of Arc passed to raise the celebrated siege. It has twenty-two arches, in provision of the terrible inundations of the Loire.

**COLLIERS AND LONGEVITY.**—It is stated on good authority that at the Pinxton collieries eight men are at work at the pits whose united ages amount to 536 years, averaging 67 years per man; there are also eight old colliers of work whose ages amount to 558, averaging nearly 70 years of age; and fourteen labourers receiving daily wages whose united ages amount to 1,008, being an average of 72 years per man. These are probably exceptional figures, but they are remarkable.

DWELLING-HOUSE LETTER-BOXES.—The Postmaster-General has suggested to the Metropolitan Board of Works the propriety of inserting in a bill to be introduced by that body in the ensuing session of Parliament, a clause for the purpose of compelling builders of houses to provide all their tenants with letter-boxes for the purpose of facilitating the delivery of letters, which would be of great public advantage. At the same time it is not intended

that such compulsion should extend to houses below a certain class.

**CONCEALMENT OF THE APOLLO GALLERY JEWELS.**—The jewels belonging to the Apollo gallery of the Louvre were concealed during the Commune in a small room, carefully walled up, on the second storey of the building erected by François I., over the Salle Henri II. and the Salon des Sept Cheminées. The work had been so skilfully executed that the insurgents, during their two months' occupation of the palace, must have passed before it a thousand times without suspecting that this treasure of jewellery, rock crystal, enamels, &c., estimated at fifty millions of francs, was so near them. The credit of this success is due to Count Clément de Ria, conservator, and to the employés of the museum, who were several times on the point of being shot for refusing to disclose the place of concealment.

#### MYSTERY OF THE HAUNTED RANGE.

##### CHAPTER VII.

An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.

Richard III.

THE sun was just rising as the Hauson tore through the quiet streets of Bloomsbury, waking the peaceful, rate-paying, respectable inhabitants from their slumbers. Sunrise was a phenomenon Mr. Mason had not often witnessed in the course of his chequered existence, getting him up in the morning before eight being one of Rosanna's bitterest crosses. He looked at it now, at the golden radiance in the East deepening and deepening until the whole sky was glorified, in much the same way as men or trial for life note the carved rails of the dock, the hats of the spectators, and the general surroundings, while waiting for the awful answer to "Guilty or Not Guilty."

Still the child slept peacefully, sweetly, like one of Correggio's smiling angels.

Duke reached Half Moon Terrace—he paid and dismissed the cab. He met the little black sweep whistling merrily as he started on his day's work and gave him good morning. Duke shrank guiltily even from him. The cobbler on the first floor was opening his shop; he, too, looked askance from the young man to the bundle, closely muffled now in the shawl.

Rosanna was sure to be up; didn't she always rise at some dismal hour in the bleak and chilly dawn? Duke set his teeth and opened the kitchen door. A man can die but once—as well face the ordeal first as last.

Duke opened the kitchen door, stalked in, and confronted his sister.

If it were possible for Miss Mason to look more unpromisingly awful at one hour of the twenty-four than another it was at this. Her thin face seemed cut in gray stone, her lips were more rigid, her eyes more steely, her spare figure more angular, and the milk of human kindness in her breast a little more strongly acid than at other seasons. The Iron Duke himself, or Jack Sheppard, or any other hero, might have quailed before the scathing glance that fell upon the intruder. The pale daylight streaming in through the one window gave Duke a ghastly and unnatural look, perhaps, for she continued to stare speechlessly, first at him, then at the bundle. He set his teeth a little harder, and opened it. If you have to jump over a precipice and break your neck, shut your eyes and take the leap at once, the torture ends sooner. He flung off the shawl, and the sleeping child lay revealed.

"Duke!"

Only one word—but the tone! In some such voice of anguish may the great Napoleon, at St. Helena, looking back at one disastrous day, have exclaimed: "Waterloo!"

"It's not mine, Rosanna—I vow it's not!" Duke cried out. "I never set eyes on it until within the last two hours."

"Not on it perhaps—but its mother—"

"Nor its mother either—that is, until three weeks ago! Good gracious, Rosanna! what a mind you must have to suspect a fellow in this way, without giving him a chance to explain! I never saw the child until it was given to me—no, forced upon me, by Jove!—two hours ago, and its mother, if she is its mother, I met for the first time, three weeks ago, down in Lincolnshire."

"Yet you fetch the child home? Misguided young man! Do you expect me to believe such a story as this?"

"I expect you to believe the truth. Don't stare at me in that uncomfortable way, Rosanna; as if you were the Gorgon's head. If you'll take the child, I'll shut the door and tell you the whole story. I don't know what to do with it; and here, it's waking up."

Miss Mason took the baby. Even Achilles had

vulnerable spot somewhere in his heel, and Miss Mason had out in her heart—a child always found its way there at once. She took it with wonderful tenderness, and removed the shawl altogether—a real India shawl she saw to her great amazement.

The little one opened its eyes—two big blue eyes—and looked with a baby stare of wonder up in her face. It was the prettiest little thing conceivable—a child of a year and a half or more, with little chiselled features, a rosebud mouth, and beautiful blue eyes crystal clear. A baby girl with dainty embroidered underclothing, a little blue silk dress of the hue of her eyes, and a gold chain and locket round her neck.

Curiosity overcame every other feeling in the breast of Miss Rosanna.

"For Heaven's sake, Duke, what does it mean, and who is this child?"

"That's more than I can tell. I don't know her name, or her age, any more than the dead. All I do know I'll tell you now. But first you may keep these things."

He drew forth the pocket-book.

"There's a hundred pounds here, which her mother gave me, and here's a ring, also given me by her mother. Now don't look like that, Rosanna! Miss Lyndith's a great lady."

"Miss Lyndith? I thought you were speaking of this child's mother, Duke!" Rosanna said, in a spectral voice.

"So I am. If there's anything wrong it's not my fault. It's a very queer and mysterious affair from first to last, and much more like one of the five-act dramas at our theatre than the events of real life."

Then while the little one lay in Miss Mason's arms, and gazed about her with solemn baby eyes, Duke went back to the twenty-fifth of March, and told the story of that night—all he had seen—all he had heard. This had been the cause of his dreaminess, his absence of mind, the change she had noticed in him.

Then he produced the note of the previous afternoon and gave it to her to read, and related all that had befallen him from three o'clock until now.

His sister listened breathlessly. She had never read a novel, or witnessed a play in her life. She had never been in love; she had no data to fall back upon that might help her to realize this story. It was like hearing Greek to her.

But she looked down, and the angelic face broke into the beautiful smile of babyhood, and two little fat hands held themselves up.

"Polly want her bekfas'."

The little silver voice went straight to that vulnerable spot in Miss Mason's chain-mail armour. A glow actually came into her complexion; she raised the child, and pressed it to her bosom.

"You're the prettiest little thing I ever saw in my life, my lit'l pet. Tell me your name."

"Polly," whispered the child. "Polly want Doozy."

"What?"

"Doozy."

Rosanna looked helplessly at Duke, who sat astounded to hear the midget speak at all.

"Perhaps it's her nurse," he suggested. "I think, now, I heard Miss Lyndith call the name 'Rosie,' in the inner room."

"Doozy, Doozy," repeated the child, impatiently.

"Polly want Doozy! Polly want her bekfas'." Polly wanted to get down."

"Polly, put the kettle on," Duke murmured, abashedly; "put Polly down, Rosanna. Let's see if she can walk."

Polly could walk very well. In her blue silk dress and flaxen curls, her gold chain and locket, her glistening bronze boots, and silk stockings, Polly looked a thorough little lady from top to toe.

"Like a small duchess, by George!" said Duke, admiringly; "a fellow might make his fortune if he could paint her. She looks like Miss Lyndith, too, about the nose, and chin, and—"

"Duke," his sister said, sternly, "never let me hear the name of that young person from your lips again. We will keep the child," her hard face softened as she looked at the tiny beauty in blue silk; "but speak no more of a creature who tells you this is her wedding-day, who is called Miss Lyndith, and who owns this child to be hers! She has reason to be thankful, poor babe, that she has been snatched from that sink of corruption, the fashionable world, at so early an age."

The poor babe did not seem particularly thankful.

After calling for "Doozy" two or three times in vain, Polly opened the cherub mouth, and set up such a howl as made Rosanna's blood curdle with new terror.

"Duke," she cried, aghast, "what will the neighbours say? We can't tell them this abominable story you have just related to me, and we must account for the child in some way. What is to be done?"

"Tell a falsehood," said Duke; "there's no other

way. We have a cousin who has left us his only child, as an heirloom. The cousin's name was Mason. Her name's Polly Mason. Polly! I don't take to that cognomen somehow. She looks like Louisa Victoria, or Eugenie, or Evangeline. Polly's common for such a little gentlewoman as that. I'll call her duchess—she looks one—I'm Duke—she's duchess, by George!" and Duke laughed boisterously at his own conceit.

It was such a relief to have the story told and Rosanna pacified.

"Little duchess—little Polly, come here, and give me a kiss."

But Polly had a temper, and flung herself away, and waited dimly for "Doozy," and her "bekfas'!"

"Go 'way," she cried, slapping Duke's proffered face. "You're a big, ugly man, and this is a ugly place, and she's a ugly thing too. Oh, Polly wants Doozy! Polly wants her bed and milk!"

"Polly shall have bread and milk," Miss Mason said, soothingly; "only do be quiet, dear. I suppose we must fabricate a story for the neighbours, Duke; and may Heaven forgive us. One can't touch pitch without being defiled. We can't have to do with the wicked ones of the earth without sharing in their wickedness."

"As I've been up all night, Rosanna, I'll turn in until breakfast time," Duke answered; "rust me out at half after eight. I am going to strike work this morning, and go to St. George's, Hanover Square, and see this young lady's mamma married. Beg your pardon, Rosanna, for alluding to her—I won't do it again. What a Dickens of a temper the little angel has!"

Duke went to bed, and Rosanna pacified Polly with some trouble and more bread and milk. For once in a way Rosanna was almost excited. A child to dress and scold and love, and a hundred pounds in her pocket!

A hundred pounds! She had never had quarter that sum at once before in her life. An illimitable vista of the things to be had with a hundred pounds opened before her. A new carpet for the parlour, a painted stand for her flowers, a new Sunday suit for Duke, a new Bible, gilt-edged, morocco-bound for herself, a set of china tea-things, even a dress, perhaps, and a pair of new shoes.

It would not purchase a farm down in the green heart of rustic England, and that was the life-longing of Rosanna Mason, but it would do so much, so much in town. And the ring—she was no judge of such things—but that must be worth fifty guineas at least.

Of course they wouldn't sell that—it must be kept for the child—poor, little stray waif—and the locket as well.

She called the little one over, and opened the locket. It held a short curl of auburn hair and the picture of a young man—a handsome young man—who looked up at her bright, smiling, life-like from the golden setting.

A dim possibility that life held things for the young and handsome which she had never known—beautiful, sweet, solemn things—stirred faintly in her forty-year-old heart.

She closed the locket, and kissed the child almost as gently as a fair young mother might have done.

"Poor little thing!" she said; "poor, little, pretty baby! There has been great wrong done somewhere, and you have to pay the penalty. Well, Heaven helping me, I will bring you up good and happy and healthy, if I can."

At half-past eight precisely she summoned Duke to breakfast.

The young man found his sister in better and gentler mood than he had ever known her in his life at this early hour.

There are a great many people in this world—very good-natured people too in the main—who don't get their tempers properly aired and on before ten a.m. It was the humanizing influence of the child, no doubt.

Polly, standing on one of the parlour chairs, looking out of the window at the busy scene in the mews opposite, was wailing in a plaintive minor key for "Doozy." She never called for her mamma Rosanna, as most babies do—always "Doozy."

Duke ate his breakfast, and started off at a rapid pace for St. George's, Hanover Square. There would be no end of a row, he thought, at the scene-room of the theatre in consequence of his non-appearance, and Tinsel and Spangle would fine him very likely; but the man who is the happy possessor of a hundred pounds can afford to defy the minions of the stage.

"I'll see Miss L. turned off," thought Duke, elegantly, "then have at thee, Spangle; it shall not be me 'who first cries hold, enough!'"

It was approaching high-noon when the scene-painter reached his destination—high-noon on a sunny April day, warm as mid-June. A stately procession of elegant private carriages filled the street—half the turn-outs in Mayfair, it seemed to the simple denizen

of Half Moon Terrace—and a mob of idlers on the look-out to see the quality.

Duke, in his haste, turning sharp round the angles of one of these white-favoured vehicles, ran violently against a gentleman coming in equal haste from the opposite direction.

"Beg your pardon, sir. Didn't mean anything offensive you know!" Duke said, politely. "I hope I haven't hurt you?"

The gentleman made no reply. He did not even seem to hear him. His eyes were fixed upon the church with a hungry, strained intensity of gaze.

"Queen customer!" Mr. Mason thought. "That young man has evidently something on his mind. He is a gentleman, too, I take it, in spite of his rough shooting-jacket and foreign hat. He has something of the look of a sailor."

On the instant the object of his thoughts turned round with a suddenness quite disconcerting, and addressed him:

"Can you tell me who is being married here this morning?"

"Well, I shouldn't like to be positive, but I think Sir Vane Charteris."

"Ah!" The stranger ground out that little word between his teeth in a way familiar to Mr. Mason on the boards. "And to whom?"

"Well, I think to Miss Olivia Lyndith. But as it is only supposition on my part, suppose we step in and ascertain?"

"I will follow you," the stranger said, falling back a step. "For Heaven's sake, hurry!"

Duke hastened in, a little surprised, but not much.

"If this mysterious young man with the auburn beard and remarkably handsome face should be Robert now," he thought; "and she should recognize him, and, shrieking 'It is he!' fall swooning at his feet, it would be quite a lively scene for St. George's."

Such rencontres were very common on the stage, and Duke saw no reason why they should not be in everyday life as well.

He led the way into the church. It was almost filled with elegantly dressed people.

Two weddings were going on, and the altar was quite a bewildering spectacle, with snow-white and azure-robed ladies and solemnly black gentlemen.

One of the pew-openers gave them a place near the door, as became their shabby coats and clumping boots.

The stranger, as he removed his hat, Duke saw was a very fair man, despite the golden bronze of his skin; and the fixed, rigid pallor of his face, the wild intensity of his blue eyes, betrayed that his interest in what was going on was no ordinary one.

"They're coming!" Duke said. "We've missed the wedding after all. The thing's over."

He was right; the newly wedded pairs had signed the register, and were sweeping down the aisle.

The first bride was a Juno-esque lady, with high colour and modestly downcast eyes. They barely glanced at her. She and her train sailed by.

The second bridal party came; the bride this time—there was no doubt about it—was the late Miss Olivia Lyndith.

It is proper of course for brides to look pale at this supreme hour of their lives. This bride was pale beyond all ordinary pallor of bridehood. Her face was ghastly; her great dark eyes looked blankly straight before her, with a fixed, sightless stare; her very lips were ashen.

The bridegroom, on the contrary—a portly, undersized, florid, good-looking man—was flushed, excited, exultant. His restless, black eyes moved about ceaselessly in a quick, nerveless sort of way, and, as he drew near, the stranger sitting beside Duke suddenly rose up.

It was impossible not to see him. The stony bride never looked, certainly, but the smiling bridegroom did; and the smile froze, and the florid colour died on his face, and an awful look of fear and horror transixed it. A wordless cry appeared to rise and die upon his lips. He seemed for an instant rooted to the spot; then the crowd, pushing on, bore him with it, and Mr. Mason was alone with his extraordinary companion.

The stranger still stood in that rigid attitude, like a man slowly petrifying.

"Gad!" thought the scene-painter, "I didn't think any human being could glare in that blood-freezing way. I suppose old Quill knows what he is about, after all, when he writes melodramas. This must be Robert. I'll ask him, by George!"

Duke cleared his throat.

"Beg your pardon," he said, "for a seemingly impertinent question, but might your name be Robert?"

"Robert? Yes," the stranger answered, mechanically.

He did not seem surprised at the question—all feeling was stupefied within him.

"Oh, it is! Perhaps, also, it may be Lisle?"



## [ROSANNA'S SUSPICIONS.]

This time the young man in the rough jacket did turn round, and looked at his questioner.

"What do you know of Robert Lisle?" he demanded.

"Well, not much, only I have heard the name, and if you were Mr. Lisle I think I could understand better your very evident interest in the lady who has just gone by."

The young man whose name was Robert laid his hand heavily on Duke's shoulder.

"You know her then?" he exclaimed. "You!"

"Well," replied Mr. Mason, "slightly. I have had the honour of doing her some little service in byegone hours, and though she didn't notice me this morning we have been very friendly and confidential, I assure you, in times past. And if you had been Mr. Robert Lisle, and had called upon her—say yesterday—I daresay she would have been pleased to see you. Yesterday she was Miss Lyndith, to-day she is Lady Charteris—all the difference in the world, you understand."

"Then she has spoken of me to you? She has not forgotten—she—"

He stopped, his voice husky, his eyes like live coals.

"She has not forgotten—decidedly not; but at the same time she hasn't spoken of you to me. You are Robert Lisle, then?"

The stranger dropped his hand and turned abruptly away.

"My name is Hawksley," he said, coldly; "and I must see her. Yea by Heaven!"—he clenched his strong white teeth—"come what may!"

"I should advise you to hurry then," suggested Duke, politely. "They start for Italy in an hour's time, I have reason to know, and if you miss her now it's all U P! Brides don't generally receive strange gentlemen on their wedding morning, but this seems an exceptional occasion, and she may see you. Shall I order you a cab and tell the man where to drive?" said Duke, inwardly burning with curiosity.

Mr. Hawksley nodded and slouched his hat down over his eyes. The last of the aristocratic vehicles had vanished long before. Duke led the way to the nearest cab-stand and entered the Hansom after the stranger.

Mr. Hawksley might order him out, but he was willing to risk it. Mr. Hawksley did not, however; he sat with his hat over his brow, his arms folded, his lips compressed under that beautiful, tawny beard, the whole way.

"He looks like the Corsair by Medora's death-bed," reflected Duke. "He has a very striking pair of blue

eyes. So has little Polly. Now wouldn't it be rather queer if (Mr. Robert Hawksley, I think he said) should be Polly's father?"

The carriage containing Sir Vane Charteris and his bride reached the mansion of Mr. Geoffrey Lyndith in Park Lane. The silence that reigned in Duke's Hansom reigned also in this elegant coach-and-four. The bride sat like some marble statue, as pale, as cold, almost as lifeless. The bridegroom sat with a leaden, livid face of abject fear.

"Did Lyndith see him, I wonder?" he thought. "He left the church before me. To be baulked like this at the last hour, after waiting so long, after risking so much. At the last hour, when the game is all my own, to have him start up as if from the very earth. And I thought, we all thought, him dead two years ago."

He let down the glass and loosened his neckerchief; something in the air seemed to choke him. He glanced at his bride, and a storm of rage at her, at himself, at Geoffrey Lyndith, at that apparition in the church, swept through him.

"She looks more like a dead woman than a bride. What will every one say? Why can't she smile, or rouge, or do anything except look like that—death in life? I scarcely know whether I love or hate her most—one day or other she shall pay for this. And to think there should have been a child too, and she should spirit it away—she has the cunning of the old fiend when she likes."

An abominable mood for a bridegroom!

The carriage stopped. He descended, and handed his bride out. The other carriages disgorged themselves. The instant he espied Mr. Lyndith he motioned him apart.

"Come into the Library," he said. "I have a word to say to you."

Mr. Lyndith led the way instantly.

Something had happened. He read it in Sir Vane's leaden face.

"What is it?" he asked, apprehensively. "Quick, Charteris; they will wonder at our absence. Let's have it in a word."

"I will. Ruin!"

"What?"

"Robert Lisle is alive!—is here! I saw him in the church!"

"Charteris, are you mad?"

"Not now! I was when I believed your story of Lisle's death. I tell you the fellow is alive, and here. I saw him in church as we came out."

"But, great Heaven, Charteris!—this must be folly—madness! the 'Royal Charter' was burned to the water's edge, and every soul on board perished."

He sailed in the 'Royal Charter.' I tell you it is impossible!"

"I tell you I saw Robert Lisle, face to face, as I left the church. She did not, or I think, in my soul, she would have dropped on the spot. He stood up, and gave me a look I'm not likely to forget. Hang it, Lyndith," he cried, in a sudden fury, "do you think I could mistake him, of all men? Before we leave the house Robert Lisle will be here."

"Great Heaven!"

Geoffrey Lyndith recoiled with startled, horrifed eyes.

"Ay," the baronet cried, bitterly, "you will believe it when he comes. There will be a lovely scene—a beautiful sensation for Park Lane. We know what she will do if she should once catch sight of him. All the story, so long hidden, will come out, and for Geoffrey Lyndith it means simply ruin!"

"He shall not see her. By Heaven he shall not!"

"Prevent the meeting if you can. He is a desperate man, if ever I saw desperation in human eyes. You will find a different man from the Robert Lisle of two years ago. Now, as you say, we shall be missed. We must go up and smile, and make speeches, and play our part until the spectre appears at the feast."

He strode out of the library. Mr. Lyndith followed him. There was no help for it—their absence had already been commented on by their guests.

They took their places at the table, all a-glitter with silver and crystal, and everybody noted their altered looks. Such a ghastly bride, and such a strange pallor on the faces of their host and Sir Vane. Something was wrong. Everybody waited, deliciously expectant of more to come.

What they waited for came. The breakfast was not quarter over when a knock thundered at the grand entrance—an ominous and authoritative knock, that thrilled through them all.

Sir Vane was raising his glass to his lips, and again the smile seemed to freeze on his face, and the glass remained half poised in his hand.

A dead silence fell.

In that silence the sound of an altercation in the hall reached them in that distant apartment.

Mr. Lyndith rose abruptly—white and stern—made a hurried apology, and hastened from the room.

A moment later and all was still.

The disturbance was quelled, but Geoffrey Lyndith did not come back.

What did it mean?

Even the pale, cold bride lifted her heavy eyes, and looked at the leaden face of the man she had married, and waited for what was to come next.

(To be continued.)



## [THE SECRET INFLUENCE.]

## THE SNAPT LINK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

*"Sybil's Inheritance," "Evelyn's Plot," &c., &c.*

## CHAPTER XX.

How busy they be to keep and save  
Both in health and also in sickness,  
And alway right sorry for our distress.

"So you are better, child," said Bernard Thorne, with a strange abruptness of manner that had a repelling harshness to the sensitive ears of the invalid. "Hannah informed me that you insisted on getting up, albeit she assured you it was long past my break-fast hour."

"I am quite well, I thank you," returned the girl, in tones that sounded sweet and musical, though there was, perhaps, a touch of haughtiness in them that ill befitted her dependent position. "And," she added, more tremulously, "I have come to express my deep gratitude for your kindness, and to relieve you of the burden I so unconsciously became to you—a stranger."

Bernard's eyes were riveted on that picturesque face, with a gaze that had, perhaps, even more than an artist's appreciation in its earnestness.

Many might have turned carelessly from features that had no classical regularity or childlike softness to command the admiration of the multitude of mere worshippers of physical beauty.

Few would have appreciated as did Bernard Thorne the wonderful depths of those rare, thoughtful eyes, that intellectual brow, that mobile mouth, which changed with each passing mood, each variation of speech or silence, that spirituelle delicacy of complexion, that graceful carriage of the perfectly shaped head, which had a mingling of pensive abandon and of maiden pride in its unconscious poise.

The artist had seen and studied every form of beauty. To him Gertrude's peculiar charm was at once the most uncommon, and, it might be, the most dangerous he had known.

It was with something of a start from his abstracted examination that he replied, after a slight pause, to the girl's reiterated:

"I have come to bid you a grateful adieu, Mr. Thorne."

"Adieu!" he repeated. "Humph! Then either you have deceived me or you are not in full possession of your senses even yet."

"I do not understand you," she returned, proudly. "I am but doing a simple and natural duty. You cannot suppose I would remain dependent on a stranger's bounty?"

"Indeed! And pray how do you mean to avoid

it?" he asked, in his strange, brusque tone. "Have you friends to support you in this great city?"

"None," she repeated, sadly, "none! But I can work till I die!"

"I don't see the necessity of either," he returned. "Child, be candid with me. If you are speaking the truth it would be simply murder, or at best manslaughter, to let you go like a dove among hawks—"

The artist paused.

One of the changes of which that expressive face was so susceptible passed over it like a withering sirocco. The very blood seemed to recede like a tide from the veins, and a startled trouble deepened the chameleon hue of the splendid eyes.

"Do not," she murmured, "do not—let me go."

"Whither?" he asked. "Child, what have you done to cast yourself in this vast, busy solitude? Is it the old tale of woman's folly that has lost you home and friends?"

"No!" she exclaimed, the life current flooding once more the empty arteries with a deep crimson, "no! I am innocent of such despicable wickedness. It is insult to doubt it!"

"Then what is the foul wrong that has banished you from home and friends?" he repeated, sternly. "You have been gently nurtured, that is easy to determine. There must be no light cause for this frenzy. I demand an explanation ere I will let you depart!"

"Is this your benevolence, your boasted aid to one who never even asked help at your hands?" she replied, with a flashing reproach, that Bernard viewed as a new phase of her remarkable features. "Would you keep me as a prisoner, Mr. Thorne? You dare not; you have no right to control my movements! I insist on my liberty to depart! Farewell, sir; I will forget all but your kindness!"

"Stop!" thundered Bernard, stung, perhaps, by the rebuke. "Girl, you speak ignorantly, unjustly! I tell you I have a right to prevent such suicide! Do you suppose I could answer to my conscience to let one as young and fair and helpless as yourself leave the shelter of my roof? Were you a criminal, flying from justice, I would scarcely permit such cruelty."

"And if it is so. If I am a fugitive?" she said. "What will you say then? Would you not think that my presence was a pollution to your roof? Would you not bid me abandon myself to the fate I deserve? Yes," she added, sadly, after a moment's pause, in which he made no reply to her appeal, "I see it, I know it must be so. It is needless cruelty to detain me. Let me go."

How could she guess the feelings that were moving the heart and sealing the lips of that singular,

unprepossessing man? How could she read the dangerous interest she inspired, the admiring inquiry that prompted his fixed, stern look.

"Do you confess yourself a guilty fugitive then? Are you escaping from justice?" he asked, slowly and dreamily.

"I am a fugitive; I am in danger," she replied. "You justly say I would not be thus without some urgent cause."

"Are you guilty?" he asked, sharply. "Answer that and I ask no more."

She did not blanch before his steel-like, questioning look, which seemed to pierce the innermost depths of her soul; but her own eyes burned with a steady, concentrated light as she returned, calmly, that mute inquiry.

"I neither acknowledge your right to ask such a confession, nor will I make one," she replied, firmly. "I have already said you have guessed rightly as to my position—I am accused, in danger. It is best for me to hide myself where my guilt or innocence concerns no one. Do as you will, I will say no more."

"Child, you are a remarkable creature, and I suspend all other judgment of you till the sure revelation of time arrives," replied the artist, suppressing with some difficulty his own passionate impulse to bid that bewitching girl find sure trust and shelter under his protection. "You say you would work. Suppose I find you some way of repaying the shelter of my home? What can you do? What are your powers?"

"I can paint," she said, her eyes glancing round the walls covered with drawings and oil paintings, of which that casual observation could scarcely reveal the true value, "and I have some knowledge of music—I could teach either."

"Humph! The question might rather be whether you could learn than teach," he returned, cynically. "But at present I shall, perhaps, have different employment for you. I am engaged on a large picture. I want a model for one of the characters introduced. I believe your face would answer to its intention. You can sit to me for Medora. Yours is the very ideal I have often thought should be her portrait. Will that not be easier work than handling the brush or drumming on dull ears the harmony you love in your soul?"

She shrank back instinctively from his covert smile. Innocent as she was, the idea of being subject for hours to the fixed gaze of those keen gray eyes—every feature scanned, every line of form and face surveyed, was repugnant to her maiden delicacy, her pride of birth—ay, and, more than all, the sacredness of her love for Rupert De Vere.

"Foolish girl! it is but earning money by what

hundreds of the fairest and noblest pay fabulous gold to accomplish. Were you a bride elect you would have your portrait taken, with the eyes of a devoted lover fixed on you in addition to my professional gaze. You ask all and give nothing, young lady. I am willing to believe in you, to give you support—shelter—concealment—safety! In return I ask but your confidence and your help in my career—in my imaginings—my hopes. Child, is it a bargain? Am I to be again thwarted—deceived—deserted, as I have been in former days? Speak, and quickly!"

The very fierceness of his manner had perhaps more weight with the bewildered girl than any arguments he could have used.

Her own nature was too deep and intense in its passions not to respond to a kindred spirit.

He had been aggrieved—betrayed by those he loved! Should she not compensate to him for such grief, console him for such treachery, prove to him that there were still truth, and constancy, and gratitude in woman?"

"It shall be so," she said, softly. "I will do my best. You shall find me grateful. But," she added, shivering, "I cannot answer for my own powers. I have been sorely tried and crushed. It is not easy to rally from such a blow."

Bernard Thorne could have exclaimed, in the words of the poet:

"Come here to my bosom, my own stricken deer," and held out his arms to enfold the fair form that looked too fragile to bear such rough storms, but he crushed back the impulse in his inmost heart, and the very effort hardened to rigidity every muscle and tone as he replied:

"You have judged wisely, Miss Lindsay, if such is the name by which you desire to be known. It is a matter of hard, pure business between us. I shall allow you the usual stipend for a model, and board and lodging as an addition for any extra service you may render me. We shall soon see whether your artist talents are worth salt and bread," he added, cynically. "I know too well what school-girl sketches are worth to be very credulous."

She did not reply.

It was a matter of careless indifference to her whether her talents were recognized, save as a means of gaining bread.

Fame! Pshaw! what value was fame to the unloved and scorned? What were even riches to the accused murderer? It was this very recklessness that imparted a new and fascinating charm to her whole demeanour in the eyes of Bernard Thorne. Satiated and *blaize* with beauty and conscious vanity he was attracted even by the repelling indifference of that despairing fugitive girl.

#### CHAPTER XXI.

Wand'ring abroad in need and beggary,  
And wanting friends, though of a goddess born,  
Yet crav'd the alms of such as passed by.

"You will not leave me in my desolate home? You will be as a daughter to me, Madeline?" pleaded Mr. Mugrave, with the piteous urgency of a helpless child. "I am doubly bereaved. My Hilda—my sole jewel, my heart's joy—lies in an untimely grave, and she—the false viper whom I had cherished in my bosom and nourished by my bounty—is a guilty fugitive from my doors. Madeline, stay with me! I cannot endure this lone house, these maddening thoughts, and live."

The girl's head was bowed in anxious, wretched doubt.

She knew that Aubrey's eyes were fixed on her in eager, hopeful suspense; she felt that a compliance would seal her destiny in his sanguine hopes—a destiny against which she would fight to the very death. Yet how refuse that broken, bereaved old man the sole consolation in his despairing solitude?

"It is all new and strange," she said, gently. "Give me time. I must think."

"But when—when?" pleaded the half-imbecile invalid. "I cannot bear suspense. It cannot need such long thought. You are an orphan; so Aubrey says. I am childless. You shall be as a daughter to me. You will never repent if you give your bright youth to cheer my dark gloom. I have gold—gold! I can repay all."

The girl's dark eyes flashed indignantly.

"Gold cannot repay love, Mr. Mugrave, and love is the only service that can avail a crushed heart. Never speak of such paltry dross more, if you hope for my consent. But," she added, more gently, "I only ask for a brief space. In a very few hours I will give you my reply, for which I must consult far other and deeper reasons than you can plead. You are right thus far. I am an orphan and alone. But with all that I can be sufficient to myself."

She walked from the room with a hasty step to hide the large drops that gathered in her dark eyes.

"Follow her, Aubrey. Plead with her. I cannot do without her. She cannot resist you as her nearest relative," said Mr. Mugrave, impatiently.

The young man was faint, however reluctantly, to obey and dog the steps of the impetuous girl into

the long range of hothouses, in the green shades of which her fairy figure had disappeared.

"Madeline," he whispered as he at length came to the spot where she had cast herself on a rustic seat in the thickest shadow of an Oriental palm, "will you listen to me?"

"Insolent, shameless intruder that you are on my very privacy, am I never to have any peace, any safeguard from your hardened insults?" she exclaimed. "Leave me, or I must seek protection elsewhere from your persecution," she added, turning passionately from him.

"Madeline, Madeline, you will drive me frantic," he said, pleadingly. "Surely you forget the relations in which we stand, you forget that you pledged your faith and love to me in former days. And, Madeline, think too of the present—think of the happiness that awaits us, if you will but be rational and ignore the past unhappy miseries. Mr. Mugrave is fairly captivated with your witcheries. He will act towards you as a father. In a brief space I can foresee he will freely receive you in the place of his lost daughter as my bride, then, at last, I shall be happy, my own worshipped, my peerless Madeline!"

"Have you forgotten all the past?" asked the girl, significantly. "Aubrey Lestrange, you are indeed lost to every generous feeling—as, every spark of man's better nature?"

"You mean the foolish jealous refusal you gave me but a few brief weeks since," said Aubrey, uneasily. "Of course I estimated that at its time value. I know that I have outraged your woman's pride by my enforced thralldom, Madeline, but you will be wiser in a little time. Listen, dearest. I trust in a brief space to restore you the diamonds that you so generously trusted to my keeping—*as*, and with redoubled splendour. You shall find that I will prove to you the real warmth of my love, my admiration, if you will but aid me in the short interval that must elapse before all will be made plain and easy before us."

A strange smile flitted over Madeline's face.

"I should much like to learn something as to the fate of those jewels," she said. "It seemed to me an insolent proceeding to ask from me back the gifts you had lavished on me in former days, and at the very moment of keenest mortification from deeper wrongs. Was it to adorn my rival that I was thus robbed?"

"No, no, no; on my honour, by all that is sacred it was for no such baseness," he exclaimed. "Did not Dacre explain to you my terrible straits, dearest Madeline, which only the deposit of those valuable jewels could relieve? It was truth, earnest, simple truth. Not one gem of the whole suit of precious stones which had sparkled on my darling's Titan-like form were among the ornaments I presented to poor Hilda."

"It may be so, but there was certainly a remarkable similarity in the suits," returned the girl, coldly.

"Were they pledged then, in order to purchase those cæsars, for your betrothed?"

"Madeline, you are enough to drive a man frantic," he said, "and you talk nonsense. As if there would be any difficulty in a man obtaining credit who was about to marry a rich heiress. I tell you the object for which I required those diamonds was utterly distinct from any such baubles. I presume," he added, bitterly, "that women suppose a man's thoughts run like theirs only on such gew-gaws, and that he will ruin himself to get them, as they would."

"Perhaps," she said, calmly, "it may be so. In any case I require the diamonds back as a condition of my silence on the past. I cannot be utterly crushed without one compensating reward, even by you, Aubrey."

"Madeline, have I not done all that man can do? I offer you my hand in the face of day, so soon as it will be possible without scandal to celebrate our second marriage. Yes, second, we will call it, dearest, for before Heaven we were united long since in hand as in heart. Yet you dwell on what is but a worthless trifle in comparison with what I will lavish on my lovely, fair viscountess."

Madeline's brilliant eyes were fixed on him with a withering scorn.

"It is well," she said. "It is better that we should understand each other. I for one prefer the present to the future; unless you procure the jewels I lent you within a week from this time there may be some doubt whether you ever will be Viscount Marston, or possess the anticipated wealth to bestow upon your fortunate bride. Most assuredly that bride will never be Madeline Cleveland. Make your election, Aubrey; you are in my power, and you know it. It is my pleasure to regain my jewels, and you must find the means of redeeming them. That is all. I decline further discussion on the subject.

The girl waved her hand with the air of a princess, and he dared not—literally dared not—resist the imperious will of that impetuous girl.

He had bound himself in hopeless slavery—how hopeless he alone could know, and but one hope remained to him in order to secure safety and repose. As his wife, bearing his name, identified with his fame, his interest, Madeline must be silent on the past.

The darker stains that poor Hilda's still-unavenged blood left on some uncondemned, undetected criminal must fade away in time. The mystery would be counted as a thing of the past, and the wedding of the bereaved lover could then be solemnized without scandal or question.

Aubrey's hopes rose, even in the very moment of failure, and there was a desperate resolve in his mind, gradually deepening and strengthening to accomplish and realize them at any cost. Pshaw! what would it avail to pause now in his career? He had sinned to win the unloved heiress of the Mugraves, and sacrificed his sole if guilty love. Was he to hesitate when the most prized and coveted awaited his grasp?

"Never!" he said, aloud. "Never. If human power can avail, I will win all yet."

"Pray what has occasioned this somewhat dangerous exuberance of imaginary strength, Lestrange?" asked a familiar voice near him, which made him start to the very edge of the steep terrace on which he had rushed after leaving the conservatory at Madeline's bidding. "Nay, do not break your neck in the outset of your doubtful emprise," resumed Philip Dacre, who was sauntering, cigar in mouth, along the sheltered walk. "It will not do to have another doubtful death on the coroner's books. I for one prefer to keep free from the slightest shadow of even a 'Not Proven' suspicion."

"What do you mean? What brought you here?" asked Aubrey, fiercely. "I will not brook eavesdropping or snores, even from you, Dacre."

"I defy the most astute lawyer in existence to prove the slightest tinge of either," returned Philip, coolly. "I was very composedly smoking my post-prandial havanna. I presume this broad terrace is a tolerably free 'highway' for the liege guests at Rose Mount."

"Yes, yes. I was hasty," returned Aubrey, collecting his faculties for the emergency. "But the fact is, Phil, Madeline is exasperating me beyond endurance. Would you believe it? She won't hear of my marrying her now that all is straightforward, though she was ready enough when I was risking my very existence to gain her."

"What reason does she give?" asked Philip, meditatively.

"Oh, I don't know. Some foolish woman's pique or imaginary mystery, I suppose. One would think she was spell bound, she is so obstinate and so reserved."

Philip did not reply for some time, and when he did speak there was a hoarse thickness in his tones very unlike his usual cynical hardness.

"Lestrange, I would scarcely let the very birds hear the wretched idea that has crossed my mind more than once of late. But when I remember the past, when I know the intense passions, the deep, resentful hate—fiercer than throbs in many a giant's heart—which Madeline Cleveland bore in that tiny form of hers, I have thought sometimes that the trial was too severe, and that all which has been hitherto imagined is false as to that wretched tragedy. Do you comprehend me?"

"No, no! How should I?" muttered Aubrey, gazing wildly at his friend. "You do not mean that—that Hilda—"

"Met her fate by other hands than either De Vere's or his cousin's. Is not that plain enough, Lestrange?"

"Do you allude to—to—"

He panted, shudderingly.

"Madeline!" whispered Philip, in a tone so hoarse, yet so distinct, in his friend's ear that it seemed to deaden his very faculties and mingle with the life current that flowed over the brain.

It was a whisper such as might have escaped the conspirators in Dunsinane—deep, low, thrilling.

Aubrey Lestrange shivered as if a ghostly spell had been laid on him as he listened.

"No, no. It is impossible! Dacre, in mercy do not even breathe such frightful words!" he said, tremulously.

"There need not fear," was the contemptuous reply. "There is that in my soul which is more powerful to restrain me than any adjurations of yours. Still, I would ask you whether I have not reason for terrible suspicions on my side—the inevitable, torturing jealousy she must have suffered, and her own desolate prospects. Her shame and despair might well excuse so foul a crime. Think, too, of all that followed. Her anxiety for Gertrude Mugrave's escape, her direct evidence for De Vere, her shrinking from any prominent position as your wife, which must possess every possible attraction for her. Have I not reason when I counsel all this, and cherish dark fears on her behalf, Aubrey Lestrange?"

He was white to lividness was that lover of Madeline Cleveland. He must have been true in his worship of her, even in the fickle weakness of his selfish nature, for that accusation to move him so deeply.

"What would you insinuate? What would you imply?" he asked, tremblingly. "Am I to accuse her? Of what avail is all this torture?"

"Accuse her!" repeated Philip, scornfully. "Man, what debased selfishness must possess your numbed heart even to dream of such treachery to one so deeply injured? I tell you, Aubrey Lestrange, that so foul do I consider your conduct, so overpowering her temptation, that even were it proved, were her hands stained with the blood of her unhappy rival, I could pardon her—ay, and take her to my heart of heart, all erring and shame-stricken as she is. On you lies the guilt, for you betrayed her to the dead. You destroyed her honourable self-respect, demanded of her more than a woman could endure! Grant that her tortures no woman could endure! And it is for you—you to dare to condemn or accuse her of blood-guiltiness!"

Aubrey's head was bowed on his breast, his every limb seemed to fail him under the denunciations that fell from his friend with such crushing vehemence.

"Dacre, do you love her?" he asked, sharply, after a moment's pause.

"She is yours. I am no traitor," was the stern reply. "But, polluted, guilty as she may be, I tell you this, Lestrange; you are not worthy of her—you cannot even comprehend the depths of her passionate nature; and unless you redress her wrongs, bear her burdens, shield her from disgrace, and suffer the natural waywardness of a tortured heart with submission and patience, the gallows would not be good for you."

Dacre impetuously cast his cigar from him as he spoke, and flung his arm in the air as if it could have descended on his companion's figure with dangerous force.

Crouchingly, silently Aubrey Lestrange withdrew from the spot, and glided through the least-frequented paths to the house.

"Heaven grant I may be preserved from doing that craven any grievous wrong!" ejaculated Philip as he watched the stealthy retreat. "But for the first time in my life I can comprehend the full power of love and jealousy; and, to my everlasting shame, I am taught it by one whom all honourable men should regard with contemptuous pity. There are times when a wild fancy that after all she may be the wedded wife of Aubrey Lestrange flashes like an inspiration over my brain. If so, what then? Ah! that way madness lies."

Philip Dacre impatiently quickened his pace, and returned to the house as the tea-bell, which with a sort of mockery of woe still rang its accustomed toll, sent forth its summons.

He entered the drawing-room after a slight readjustment of his toilet.

Madeline was there, sitting before the tea-table with a quiet grace that had of late subdued her former careless haughtiness.

The miniature figures robed in sables lost some of the picturesque foreign air it had worn when Philip first saw it, but it gained in the domestic yet high-bred air which the sadder garb threw over that remarkable girl. Formerly she seemed a creature rather to gaze at and admire an apart from its kind. Now she wore the aspect of a lovely, distinguished maiden, who would grace the noblest homes of the proud English aristocracy.

Could it be possible that shame and guilt could sit on that graceful head, that proud bearing?

There was a brilliant flash in those dark, coal-like eyes that gave the key note to her passionate nature, and Philip Dacre shuddered as he remembered the pale, darkened features of the murdered Hilda Mugrave.

#### CHAPTER XXII.

The world is still decked with ornament; There is no vice so simple but assumes Some mark of virtue on its outward parts.

"WELL, Mr. Lestrange, I am very glad to see you. I began to fear that you had forgotten our little engagement," said Mr. Andrews, in his blandest tones. "It is more months that it was arranged to be weeks since our compact was made."

"Yet, of course, the reason was patient to you and all," returned Aubrey, restraining his impatience from very irksome considerations of prudence.

"True, true. Of course it was a very sad business, and, I presume, rather detrimental to your prospects," said the usurer, cautiously. "However, I dare say you have been able to arrange your affairs by this time, Mr. Lestrange. Are you prepared to settle up finally, and take the whole of your property out of my hands? Let me see—I think the original debt and interest, together with the consideration—you understand, amounts to—"

"Confound you, and your 'consideration' too," interrupted Aubrey, angrily. "Do you suppose I am Master of the Mint, to find unlimited capital when

all my plans and expectations have been so signalized?"

"Then, may I ask, what is the purport of your visit, and what proposal you have to make?" asked Andrews, gloomily. "I am not responsible for your difficulties, Mr. Lestrange, nor do I mean to suffer for them."

"Stuff and nonsense, man! As if it were possible for you to lose a penny while you hold the security you do! But I have not come empty-handed, after all," he added as Andrews laid his hand warningly on the massive key of his heavy safe. "And you must be a good fellow, Andrews, and stretch a point for me, on a pinch. You must know that I am the positive heir of the title and estates of Marsden, to say nothing of the very great prospect that Mr. Mugrave will still make me a very handsome share in his wealth."

"Please to come to the point, Mr. Lestrange. A little ready cash is far better than all the promises. What have you brought me?"

"I have brought you the duplicate deeds," returned Aubrey, "and, in return for them, and the sum of two hundred pounds, which I have mustered with some difficulty from the heavy expenses I have sustained, I want the diamonds I deposited with you."

"Impossible, quite impossible, Mr. Lestrange! They are worth too much as security for me to part with them so easily. And of course you cannot be in need of them just now, after your bereavement."

"Insolent scoundrel!" rose to the young man's lips, but he suppressed the words ere they were uttered, and said, in a more modified tone:

"It would be better, Mr. Andrews, for you to confine your remarks to strict business, and not trouble yourself or me with comments as to my affairs or wishes. You will be so good also as to remember that the jewels were deposited as a security for the safety of the duplicates you obliged me with, and, as to the balance promised, you can add that to the original sum, which will be forthcoming ere many months, or perhaps weeks, are past."

Mr. Andrews remained thoughtful and silent for a few minutes, and Aubrey deduced favourable inferences from the pause in his reply.

But the first words were of little promise.

"It is quite contrary to my rules to alter the original advance, Mr. Lestrange. It makes irregularity in the accounts, and is a loose and dangerous way of conducting business. I must have the transaction completed and cleared ere we commence any other. In brief, I cannot accept less than two hundred and fifty pounds for the risk I have run, and fifty pounds more as premium on the interest now overdue. Bring me the balance in three days from this time, and you shall have the jewels, and, what is more, I am willing to give you a reasonable time before pressing you for the settlement of the remainder. You cannot surely complain of such liberality as that, which I am induced to grant solely in consideration of the affection you have sustained, I may add."

Aubrey winced under the familiar, patronizing tone of the usurer, but he was too completely in his power to gratify his intense longing to kick the self-sufficient scoundrel down his own not over-clean stairs.

"But the deeds," he said; "they had better be destroyed at once."

"No doubt," returned Andrews, with a covert smile; "they are very awkward possessions, are they not, Mr. Lestrange? And when burnt they, like dead men, 'tell no tales.'"

"And living ones need no unnecessary reflections!" said Aubrey, his lips quivering indignantly. "Here they are; shall we look over them to see all is correct, and nothing missing?"

"It is quite refreshing to see a young gentleman so full of business habits," remarked the usurer, sarcastically. "The comparison is soon made, since I have the others at hand."

He unlocked a small chest, opened a drawer, and took from it a packet, the contents of which were quickly extracted and exhibited to their rightful owner.

The papers were identical, even to the most critical observer, and Aubrey signified his satisfaction with the result.

"Then there is no farther difficulty; they may be consigned to the flames," resumed the usurer, calmly. Tearing the documents in deliberate pieces, he threw them into the fire, and stirred the coals till every vestige had disappeared. "Now then we have no further anxiety on that head, eh, Mr. Lestrange? At least, you have not."

There was a remarkable smile on the hard face of the usurer that would perhaps have perplexed any one less completely engrossed than Aubrey was with his own urgent needs.

"I shall have less when the originals are in my keeping, Mr. Andrews," he said, coldly. "However, it is one step in that direction, I will acknowledge. Then all that remains is to find the remaining one

hundred pounds, on payment of which you will restore to me the jewels deposited with you?"

"Yes, and keep your secret inviolate, which is a great deal more valuable to you, I imagine," returned the usurer, carefully locking the massive chest. "Shall I expect you in three days, then, Mr. Lestrange?" he added as the young man rose to depart.

"Yes; in less than a week, at any rate," was the reply. "And, as my time may probably be pressing, be kind enough to be prepared. Good day."

And he forcibly drew the door after him with an impatient jerk.

The usurer gave a low, long chuckle as Aubrey disappeared.

"Is it possible that such idiots exist?" he said to himself. "Julius Andrews, either you are a prodigy of talent, or you have to deal with the most soft-brained idiot that ever owned eyes, ears, or understanding. But even yet the game is not played out, and my moves will be guided by circumstances as it goes on."

Pushing away the chest, the man of business turned to other affairs demanding his attention.

Madeline Cleveland had slept little on the night after Mr. Mugrave's touching entreaty for her presence in his desolate home,

No one but herself comprehended the full weight of the obstacles to her compliance with such an arrangement.

It was with a shuddering dread that she contemplated a prolonged residence in that blood-stained house, where the voices that had sounded, the steps that had lightly trod in its spacious halls, its long corridors, its massive staircases, were silent and gone.

Hilda, Gertrude, where were they—the youthful tenants of the luxurious home?

One dead—resting for ever in a narrow bed; the other an accused fugitive in the land, if indeed she had not altogether fallen a victim to the hardships and anguish that must have been her bitter portion. Rupert de Vere—the lover of the one, the beloved of the other—was in like manner a dishonoured exile from the roof that had sheltered his boyhood and youth.

There was little to allure a young and impulsive girl in a mansion clouded by such associations; but there was one feeling deeper, more intolerable still, that was a secret in Madeline's own breast—one which tortured her by its contest with the opposing pleadings of that lone, bereaved father, whose affliction if not his character formed so strong a plea for compliance with his request.

Madeline was wretched as she lay on her sleepless couch.

Poor girl! whatever might have been her early errors they were amply atoned by the misery that no one must share, which no hope could gild, no time soften.

She started from her bed with the early dawn of the soft February morn, that heralded in its balminess the approach of spring, and, wrapping a thick cloak over her hasty toilet, she left the house, to escape if possible by rapid exercise the pressure of her fruitless thoughts.

The hours at Rose Mount were too irregular under present circumstances for her to fear the punctual announcement of the morning meal, and she hurried on, without taking heed of distance or time, till she reached a spot where the roads diverged; then she hesitated for a few moments whether to risk a random choice or return in her steps through the park to the house.

Perhaps her choice was hastened by the approach of a tall, singular-looking woman, whose peculiarity of gait, and dark, foreign aspect indicated her to be either of another clime than English or of that wandering race who own no country and need no home.

Madeline had been strangely nervous since the terrible tragedy at Rose Mount, and she instinctively turned and began to walk as fast as she could without a dangerous appearance of flight.

But the long limbs of the intruder soon gained on her petite steps, and ere she had gone many paces, the voice which unmistakably spoke of foreign origin sounded alarmingly close to her ears.

"Have you lost your way, young lady? Can I direct you?" she said, in the rich tenor tones of the South.

"No, thank you—I am going home," answered the girl, hurriedly. "I need no direction."

"Are you sure of that?" returned the woman, significantly. "Are you sure that you are not even now in doubt and perplexity that seem to have no solution, and to which you would ask no counsel? Am I not right?"

"I suppose it is so with every one," said Madeline, coldly. "At any rate, good woman, it is not from strangers that we ask guidance."

"Not from strangers! Well, perhaps you are right; but it is sometimes hard to say who is a stranger and who a friend. I can soon convince you that I am no stranger to your affairs, your story, or

your very doubts and fears. If I do this, will that convince you that I am able to enter into your trouble?"

Sorrow and anxiety dispose the heart to catch at the wildest and most improbable hopes, and Madeline, in her lonely helplessness, felt a weak credulity for which she despised herself, and it gave a desperate sharpness to her refusal.

"I have no faith in such predictions," she said. "If you want money, take it, but do not try to impose upon me by vain pretences."

"Do you take me for a fortune-teller?" returned the woman, drawing her tall figure up in scorn. "Poor child! Well, you speak in ignorance, and I ought not to resent it," she added, a moment after. "I could if I would pretend to such knowledge as might shake your disbelief, and make you think I had other than mortal means of acquiring it. But with you I will not practise such tricks; I will but let you see I am well and deeply acquainted with your innocent secrets. Listen," she added; "you have been a waif on this weary world from earlier years than you can well recall; you have been abandoned to a dangerous and wretched independence; and, like the young and the impulsive, you have rushed into misery, danger, and disgrace. Now, when your eyes are opened, when you see the gulf before you, you pause, and shiver, and doubt whether you dare linger on its brink, whether you shall cast yourself headlong into its fatal depth, or start back into the dark wilderness that lies beyond. Am I not right?"

"You speak too vaguely for me to judge—such language may apply to many," replied the trembling girl.

"Then I will be more explicit, though it is perilous to use names, even where the birds alone can listen. You have been betrayed by Aubrey Lestrange, and now you shrink from the fate you once thought the happiest on earth—you are offered a home from whose safety and luxury you turn with fear and disgust. Yet there is but little alternative for one who has forfeited all, save in such protection."

Madeline shrank within the folds of the ample cloak she wore, as if to hide herself from that cruel picture of herself, but still she did not trust, did not cast herself on the counsel of one so strange and relentless.

The woman came nearer—nearer still.

"One word more," she said, "and perhaps you will trust my power and knowledge then."

She whispered something in the girl's ear that made her bound back.

"No, no, you cannot—you will not betray it!" she said. "You cannot prove it, even were it possible to be true!"

"Poor child, poor child!" said the woman, more sadly. "Fear not me. I would not harm your mother's child; and I only tortured you with that word to show you I was deep in the inmost secrets which you believed no other could know. Now listen to me. Do not fear to accept Eldred Mungrove's offered protection, but overcome every reluctance to stay in that gloomy scene—every terror of that blood-stained atmosphere. You shall not be abandoned so long as you need or merit help and protection; but, mark me, there must be submission on your part, and trust, and self-sacrifice, or the hopes that may yet dawn on you will never gild the deep and guilty clouds that surround you and yours. Farewell. Obey my counsel, or I will not keep the pledge of secrecy I have given."

She waited not for an answer, but in a few seconds had strode out of sight of the petrified girl.

(To be continued.)

**A NEW COALFIELD.**—An important discovery of a new coalfield has been made at Hales Owen, near Dudley. During the past seven years Mr. Dawes has been sinking and exploring the borders of the South Staffordshire Coalfield, and, after spending 20,000*l.*, has come upon coal 14 feet thick, at a depth of 308 yards. It is expected that the discovery will result in a very large extension of the mineral resources of this district.

**NOT ENOUGH.**—How many toil on, disquiet and harass themselves, as if desperately struggling against poverty, at the same time that they are surrounded with abundance!—have not only enough, but more than enough—for more, in fact, than they actually enjoy. Still, on they go, worrying themselves incessantly in the endeavour to acquire more property, as if under the influence of some fatal spell. To the tasks of labour there are seasons of intermission, but to the toils imposed by the vain endeavour to satisfy imaginary wants there are none. It would seem that "enough" is a nonentity, a dream, a chimera—something conceived as possible to be met with, yet never found. As far, indeed, as our neighbours are concerned, we can generally find very good and sufficient reasons why they ought to sit down perfectly satisfied and content with what has fallen to their lot. But in our own case—that is, in

each man's particular case—the argument becomes altogether changed, and every one can find very good reasons wherefore he should be exempted from the rule he lays down for others, and be privileged to be discontented. The true policy is, if we cannot raise our circumstances to the level of our desires, our endeavour must be to cut down our desires and expectations to the level of our circumstances; and we should then generally find that we have quite enough, where we now fancy we have too little.

## LIFE'S SHADOWS.

### CHAPTER XLV.

UPON the day after Lord Thornhurst's return to town from Brighton a change was made in the arrangements of the house in Belgrave Square. The disused drawing-rooms were thrown open and warmed, the covers were removed from the furniture, and an air of habitation reigned in place of the late dulness and desolation.

It was apparent to the household that Lady Thornhurst meant no longer to confine herself in solitude to a few rooms, but that the usual gaieties of the season were to be entered upon by the Thornhursts, after their annual fashion.

The marquis and marchioness met at their meals as though nothing was amiss between them, and both acted well their parts in the domestic drama of keeping up appearances. Not even the portly, bewigged butler or the dapper, becalmed footmen who waited at table suspected that those quiet, smiling faces and courteous tones were but the mask covering a terrible despair and jealousy.

At the fashionable hour the marchioness drove in Hyde Park, where of course she encountered a host of fashionable friends, who congratulated her on her recovery from her supposed illness, and announced their intention of calling upon her without delay. The marquis rode in Rotten Row, sitting his thoroughbred horse with a grace and ease many other riders envied, and not a line or feature of his fair Saxon face betrayed his secret unrest and misery.

This sacrifice duly made to "society"—that many-tongued Cerberus to whom imperilled persons are continually throwing sops—the noble pair returned to Belgrave Square, the marquis riding beside his wife's carriage like a lover.

Lady Thornhurst dressed for dinner, which in town was served to them at eight o'clock. After dinner the marquis excused himself with elaborate politeness, and went out to his club or elsewhere for the remainder of the evening.

The marchioness entered alone the stately double drawing-rooms, and prepared to pass a dreary evening in solitude. The long and lofty rooms, carpeted and upholstered in the utmost luxury and good taste, were bright as day, under the mellow radiance of the two great gasoliers, whose light was reflected in every corner. Two large grate fires gave heat and genial glow to the rooms, and fresh flowers from the conservatory crowded the vases, imparting a gentle perfume to the air. The curtains of crimson satin over white lace room one found no hint of the wintry fog and chill without.

Lady Thornhurst wheeled a crimson-cushioned chair to a corner of one of the hearths, and, taking up a dainty painted, ivory-mounted screen, sat down near the fire, and gave herself up to thought.

Her love for her husband was the one great principle of her being, and his refusal to believe in her defence cut her to the soul. Not even her love for her children—for her lost first-born—could compare with the great, passionate, tender, and devoted love she felt for her kingly husband. Now that he had turned from her in scorn and bitterness, the world was very dark to her. Not all her outraged pride and conscious rectitude of purpose could sustain her under the great calamity of his contempt and supposed hatred for her.

"I could have borne anything but this," she murmured, with a dreary look in her dusky eyes. But this is more than I can endure! Oh, Antony, my husband, I have lost you for ever! If I had only been frank in the days of our courtship! I could have borne his hatred better than I can now, when I know him so noble, so grand, so great-souled! Oh, if the shadow of my old life—the life with Digby Holm—might pass from me, and I might walk at last in the glorious sunshine of freedom and joy! But I shall come out from under that shadow only when I am borne to my grave!"

She stared at the blue and leaping flames with a far-away and unseeing look. The shadows of her old life seemed tangible, visible blackness enfolding her closely, and their pall-like gloom settled heavily down upon her spirit. With a wifely love and tenderness she yearned for the affection that was withheld from her—the support that was denied her.

In very pity to herself she put from her all thoughts of Lord Thornhurst, and her mind then drifted to the subject only less dear than him—her lost daughter.

She thought of all that Holm had told her on the previous evening concerning her daughter's beauty and intelligence and goodness. She remembered that he had planned to marry that innocent girl to a rogue—a dissolute comrade of his own—whom the girl hated, and that her life would thus be rendered one long misery. The mother's heart ached for her unknown and suffering child.

Very sorrowful and dreary, convulsed with a passing anguish, was the beautiful face in the shadow of the painted hand-screen.

That far-off look still brooded in her eyes when she was suddenly brought back to a sense of her surroundings by a heavy double knock upon the street door.

Her first thought was of Captain Holm. She half arose, expecting his entrance, when a footman entered bearing a salver on which lay a single card. It bore the name of Sir Victor Cheswick.

A great wave of relief passed over the mind of Lady Thornhurst as she read the name. Her face brightened a little from its dull pallor and dreariness. Sir Victor was an especial favourite of herself and the marchioness.

"Show the gentleman in, Peters," she said. "I am always at home to him."

The footman withdrew, ushering in the young baronet—the lover of Lady Thornhurst's unacknowledged and unknown daughter.

The marchioness arose at his entrance, with something more than her society smile. There was a warmth of welcome in her eyes that showed how she regarded him.

Sir Victor approached her with a quick, borish tread. The shadow of some great trouble hung about him, and he was grave and careworn. He had sought all day to find his fugitive love, but had failed as completely as had Tessa's enemies. He had visited Laburnum Villa and the lodging-house in Paddington, but had failed to obtain even a clue to Tessa's movements. He knew that she had fled from him as well as from her enemies, but he was strong in the faith and determination that he should find her. With the sanguine hopes of love and youth, he could not believe her lost to him for ever. "I am glad to see you, Victor," said the marchioness, giving him her hand. "When did you come to town?"

"The day before yesterday," replied the young baronet. "I was summoned up by the illness of an old college friend, but he is recovering. I was shocked to see in the papers that you have not been in good health, and indeed, dear Lady Thornhurst, you are looking quite worn and ill," added Sir Victor, anxiously.

"I am not well," said the marchioness, briefly. "And you look troubled, Victor. Is it the illness of your friend that gives you that careworn look?"

"No, I am in serious trouble," said the young baronet, drawing a chair near to that of Lady Thornhurst as she resumed her seat. "I have no mother or near friend to go to in my trouble, and you have always been so good to me, dear Lady Thornhurst, that I persuaded myself that I had a sort of claim upon you, and I have come to you with my anxieties. But you are not well enough to listen to me?"

"Yes, I am, Victor," said the marchioness, with a sad smile. "I should like to be drawn out of myself by doing something for another. You have a claim upon me, as have all of my dear husband's relatives. But are you not exaggerating your perplexity in calling it trouble? What serious trouble can affect Sir Victor Cheswick? You cannot be embarrassed for money with an income of ten thousand a year. It must be that you are in love, my dear boy. I should be rejoiced to hear such news of you!"

The young baronet coloured, but, meeting her kindly, sympathizing gaze, said, bravely:

"You are right, Lady Thornhurst. I am in love!"

"You fear the lady does not love you?" asked the marchioness, encouragingly.

"No, I have not that to trouble me. I know she loves me. We are betrothed!"

Lady Thornhurst looked perplexed.

"The parents are obdurate, perhaps?" she suggested. "But I cannot understand why they should be. You are of excellent family, the representatives of an old name, young, well looking, educated, good tempered, rich—what more can they want for their daughter? A royal prince?"

Sir Victor smiled sadly.

"Let me tell you my story, dear Lady Thornhurst," he said, "then advise me. I am in love with a beautiful, noble, and charming young girl, whom I met for the first time last week—"

Lady Thornhurst uttered an exclamation.

"I have known her but a short time, you would say," said Sir Victor, "but I loved her the first time I saw her. We have been thrown together since in a manner that made us better acquainted with each other than months of society intercourse would have done."

"But are you sure that you know her character?" asked Lady Thornhurst. "You should not rush into marriage blindfold," and she sighed. "You are too noble and good, Victor, to suffer your life to be blighted by some clever young adventuress. Is your betrothed of good family and well connected?"

"When I first met her—last week—she was governess in a family in Dorset. Her lady employer was a vulgar, purse-proud woman, without heart or conscience. I was riding along the road in the morning, on my way to Wimborne Minster, when I beheld a young girl struggling in the arms of a great, coarse, hulking country squire, who was trying to steal from her pure lips a kiss! That young girl was my Tessa. I came to her assistance, and compelled the brutal fellow to apologize to her. That was my first meeting with Tessa."

"Her name is Tessa? She is Italian?"

"No, she is purely an English girl, but of a type rare even in England. She has hair of pale gold, so fine and soft that no spun silk could rival it. It has a peculiar wave or wrinkle, as one might call it, and it has a massy effect when she gathers it away from her low, broad forehead and fastens it into such a coil at the back of her head as the ladies now wear. An artist would love to paint that pale, glittering, wrinkling mass of golden hair," said the young lover, enthusiastically.

"I can imagine how it looks," said Lady Thornhurst, smiling. "I have seen such effects produced in statues and paintings, although rarely. Is her wavy hair her sole beauty, Victor? Has she blue eyes?"

"No; her eyes are gray—deep, dark, and tender—great, limpid eyes, shaded by black lashes, and looking full of lights and shadows. But for the great and noble soul that looks through those eyes you would take them for the tender, trusting eyes of a loving little child."

"Her name is Tessa?" murmured the marchioness, with some agitation. "I have seen such eyes as you describe, Victor—limpid gray eyes shaded by black lashes and contrasting with pale gold hair. It is a singular and remarkable combination, and I have never seen it but that once; but the eyes and the hair belonged to a little child."

"You could not have seen my Tessa," said Sir Victor, positively. "Poor darling! No fashionable ladies ever crossed her path in her early days. But to go on with my story, from which I have rambled in a vain attempt to describe Tessa's beauty. The second time I met her was when I was riding and she was walking along the country road. It was the day after her adventure with the squire; but the lapse of one day had changed Tessa's entire destiny. Her father had returned from abroad, and claimed her. He had taken her into the house of this very dissolute bachelor squire who had insulted her. The squire's reputation was bad enough to darken even that of an innocent guest, and I warned Tessa of the peril of remaining under his roof. She flushed with her innocent, girlish shame, and thanked me for the warning. We had a long interview, and I rode on to my home, longing to protect her from her enemies and make her my wife. I could not bear to leave her at the Grange—my poor, friendless little Tessa!"

"Surely her father is her friend?"

"He is her worst enemy. Listen, and you shall hear. I had hardly departed, when the cowardly squire came out and offered Tessa his hand. She refused him, and her father and the squire made her a prisoner in her own rooms. She escaped at midnight, with the aid of the housekeeper, and set out on foot, in the worst storm of this winter, for Wimborne Minster—a journey of thirteen miles. It so happened—that by the direction of an over-ruled Providence, as I shall always believe—that I received on that very evening a telegraphic summons to come up to London to see my college friend, who was supposed to lie at the point of death. Foreseeing the snow, I set out in my dog-cart about midnight to go to Wimborne Minster. I was anxious to catch the early express. Out on the wide, wild heaths, in the blinding snow and storm, I found my poor little Tessa, staggering blindly and almost exhausted. I took her to the town, and brought her to London."

"I understand," said the marchioness, with a warm smile. "Your little girl is a fugitive from these enemies of hers, and you want me to protect her? Bring her to me, Victor. You are very dear to me, my boy, and I will protect this fair young girl for your sake."

The young baronet shook his head.

"She is gone!" he said, desolately. "I brought her to her friends in London, and they found lodgings for her where she would be safe. But her father got out a writ or warrant, or some such thing, and compelled Mrs. Dennis to disclose Tessa's address. But on going to Tessa's lodgings it was found that she had fled. She was educated in a boarding-school, and knows nothing of the wickedness of the world. She is a wanderer—alone—and as unsuspecting and as trusting as a little child. Great Heaven! what will become of her?"

"She will write to you, Victor. She has fled only from her persecutors."

"She will not do that, Lady Thornhurst," said the young baronet, gloomily. "She wrote me a letter renouncing me. It is singular. I cannot understand it. Perhaps you can help me to a solution of the mystery. In the train I told her I loved her, and she confessed that she loved me, and agreed to marry me. Then I told her that I should ask you to protect her, and I praised your beauty and goodness. She inquired if you were as beautiful as a picture she had, and she drew from her pocket, with a delicious shyness as if she loved that sketch, a picture done in pencil upon paper. To my astonishment, I found it was a picture of yourself."

"Of me? Victor, it is impossible!"

"It was a picture of you as you must have looked in your youth," affirmed Sir Victor. "I knew it in an instant. Tessa had found it in the squire's house, had fallen in love with it, and had taken possession of it. She seemed amazed when I told her whose picture it was; she was silently worshipping."

"Then I remember she put to me a host of questions about you, such as a young girl would naturally ask about one in whom she was deeply interested. She wished to know if you were good—you see what an honest little soul is my Tessa—how many children you have, if you had been married before, and other inquiries that were natural in one about to be allied to you by marriage."

"I told her—you will pardon my frankness, dear Lady Thornhurst, but Tessa is my betrothed, and has a right to know all that I know—I told her about yourself, your children, and the marquis. I gratified her innocent and natural curiosity to the utmost."

"I mention even these trivial things because they may throw light upon her renunciation of me, and the strange change that seemed to come over her while we talked. I attributed that change to physical exhaustion at the time. Now I think it had a mental source."

"At what moment did you notice the change in her?" asked the marchioness, her face growing deathly in its pallor. "What were you saying at the time?"

"It was something utterly irrelevant—something that could not possibly affect my Tessa," said the young baronet, reluctantly, and with some embarrassment. "I was telling her something about Lord Thornhurst, his disposition, peculiarities, and prejudices. I told her—pardon me, dear Lady Thornhurst—that he was naturally jealous, and that he hated a woman who had been divorced—"

Lady Thornhurst uttered a stifled cry.

"Go on," she said, averting her face.

"Tessa was silent then, I think, for a little while, then she asked me a question that was so utterly preposterous that I could not but smile. She asked me if you had not been divorced."

"She asked you that?"

"Yes; it was odd, was it not? I told her No, but after that she seemed strangely thoughtful and tired, and, as I said, I attributed her fatigue to exposure. But on the night I left her with her friends at Kentish Town she wrote me a tear-blotted note, saying that there was an unexpected obstacle to consider, and that she had another than herself to consider, and that she should never marry. She has fled from me as well as from her enemies. What am I to do? What has changed my Tessa so suddenly? Your woman's wit, dear Lady Thornhurst, may solve the problem that I cannot," concluded the young baronet, anxiously.

"How did she happen to find my picture down in Dorset?" asked the marchioness, abruptly.

"Perhaps the squire copied it out of some annual or print," suggested Sir Victor, wonderingly. "But the picture could have had nothing to do—"

"What was the squire's name?"

"Todhetly. He was in the army once."

Lady Thornhurst gasped and shivered.

"I—I heard of an Ensign Todhetly once," she murmured. "He belonged to a Dorset family. It must be the same."

"Very likely. Then perhaps he drew the picture from life?"

"The girl's name was Tessa, you say. What is her father's name?"

"Holm—Captain Digby Holm."

The marchioness leaped to her feet, wild and white,

her eyes flaming, her lips parted. One hand flew to her heart. With the other she clung to the back of her chair to steady herself.

"His name—tell me again!" she panted.

Her terrible excitement communicated itself to the young baronet. He arose also, growing pale.

"His name is Captain Digby Holm," he repeated, mechanically.

"And—the girl?"

"Is named Tessa Holm! She is the captain's only child!"

"He calls her Tessa? Father in Heaven! that girl is mine—mine, Sir Victor! She is my first-born—my only daughter!"

A look of keen concern gathered in the eyes of the young baronet. He began to fear that her ladyship was going mad.

"Your child?" he said. "Impossible! Dear Lady Thornhurst, Tessa's mother is dead! Your child? Why, Tessa was brought up till she was eight years old by a brutal and ignorant old woman in a rude wayside inn! And she would have been to-day an illiterate rustic but for the noble charity of a poor London clerk, who befriended and educated her. Your child? Oh, Lady Thornhurst, Tessa's father hates her with a cruel hatred, and means to force her into a degrading marriage with his comrade, Todhetly. Your child would not be so helpless—so desolate—so utterly forlorn!"

The marchioness wrung her hands.

"Every word you say confirms my suspicions!" she cried. "Victor, your Tessa is my lost child—my little Georgia! I am that being Lord Thornhurst abhors, a woman who has procured a divorce from her husband! Captain Holm was my first husband, and the law freed me from him; he is now my persecutor. He stole my child from me in her babyhood, and meant to bring her up in ignorance, that she might break my heart! She is gone, you say? A wanderer in this wide, cruel, wicked London? She knows the whole story, don't you see, Victor? She has refused to marry you that she may save me! She knows I am her mother! Oh, my noble-souled, my wounded little Tessa—where are you now?"

#### CHAPTER XLVI.

Tessa was by no means the friendless wanderer the fears of her friends portrayed her. She had found a safe and secure refuge, by means which we will proceed to explain.

Being a bright, active, warm-hearted girl, with quick sympathies, a keen appreciation of the ludicrous, and an unselfish spirit, she had been exceedingly popular among the five-and-thirty pupils at the Lacy Institute, and numbered among them some genuine friends.

The sleeping arrangements at the scholastic abode in which five years of her life had been passed were exceedingly simple.

The younger pupils slept in small single beds in a long dormitory, and were watched over by night by the same governess who instructed them by day.

The elder pupils were lodged in small cells opening out of the dormitory. These cells, lighted by a single window, and furnished in a manner that would have delighted an ancient Spartan, were each shared between two young ladies.

During the last year of her stay at the institute Tessa's dingy little room had been shared with a young lady a year or more older than herself, and a strong friendship had existed between the two.

When Tessa left the establishment to enter upon life and its duties Miss Charlotte Hamlyn, her roommate, also quitted school.

The futures of the two young ladies promised to be widely different. Tessa was to be a governess, and Miss Hamlyn was to enter society as the eldest daughter of a widow lady of fortune residing at Sydenham. It did not seem probable that the two would meet again; but they parted vowing, in school-girl fashion, an eternal friendship for each other.

It was to Miss Hamlyn then that Tessa had gone, after a day and a night of nervous anxiety in her small room in the lodging-house at Paddington. The fear of being discovered by her father, as expressed in the note she had left addressed to Mrs. Dennis, had grown upon her, and that, with other reasons made plain to the reader, induced her to leave the lodgings in which Agnes Dennis had placed her, and to seek out a secure refuge.

She had gone down the stairs with her little parrot, had stood on the house steps and had signalled a passing cab, precisely as Mrs. Allison had described her movements to Mrs. Dennis, Holm, Todhetly, and the police-sergeant, and as the housemaid had previously described to Mrs. Allison. She had gone to London Bridge station, and had thence proceeded by train to Sydenham.

On alighting at the Sydenham station she entered a cab, gave her order, and was driven to The Dingle,

a pretty villa, much ornamented, and enclosed in ample grounds laid out with taste.

The cabman rang the garden bell, and a servant appeared.

On being informed that Miss Hamlyn was at home Tessa descended from the cab, paid her fare, and, dismissing the cabman, made her way up the smoothly gravelled walks towards the dwelling. With her parcel in her hand, her face closely veiled, and without any attendant, she met with but scanty civility from the pampered servants of the house, one of whom ushered her into a small reception-room, and departed to inform Miss Hamlyn that "a young person wished to see her."

For a full half-hour Tessa sat alone and neglected, no one even looking in upon her. She put back her veil and waited patiently, with a gathering apprehension that Miss Hamlyn of The Dingle was a different being from the gay and affectionate Lotty who had known. She repented her precipitancy in venturing to come to Sydenham without first writing, and wondered if she should be obliged to go back to Paddington and to the dangers which there lurked for her.

She was growing very anxious when finally the tapping of metallic boot heels on the polished oaken floor of the hall, and the rustle of silken drapery, were heard. She arose, eager, and trembling with her long suspense, and she was standing, her head bent forward, her elastic figure drooping, when the owner of the boot heels and silken drapery rustled into the room.

It was Miss Hamlyn at last.

Tessa sprang forward, flushing with joy and relief, and crying out:

"Oh, Charlotte!"

"Why, Tessa Holm! Is it you, you darling, come to spend the day with me?" exclaimed Miss Hamlyn. "I am delighted to see you. You should have sent up your name, you naughty girl, and I would have had you up in my dressing-room. How was I to know that 'the young person' was my old school-fellow, Tessa Holm?"

She embraced Tessa with school-girl rapture.

As may be conjectured from her address to Tessa, Miss Hamlyn belonged to the order of young women known as "gushing." She was also somewhat affected in her manner of speech, and both faults had grown upon her since leaving school.

She was a tall young lady, with an immense chignon, and a long thick curl straying in front of each shoulder, and she wore a row of tiny corkscrew curls across her forehead, the effect of which was to lend an infantile cast to her countenance. She had a wasp waist, and in consequence a very red nose, which was turned up at the end. She had a pasty complexion, due to an over-fondness for sweets of all kinds. Altogether, although she followed the fashions with painful alertness, poor Miss Charlotte was no beauty—a fact over which her stout, worldly mother lamented openly a score of times each day.

But Miss Hamlyn, in spite of her affectations, possessed something of far more value than mere beauty of form and feature—she had a warm, true heart, and it was for this that Tessa loved her.

"Sit down, you darling," said Miss Charlotte, in a species of ecstasy. "Or, better still, come up to my room. I shall not let you go again before evening. You are a prisoner for the day."

"Wait until you hear what I have to say," said Tessa, gently. "Dear Charlotte, I have come to you in distress. I thought, in memory of our old friendship, that you would help me."

"Sit down then, Tessa, and let's hear what the trouble is," said Miss Hamlyn, leading Tessa to a sofa. "To think of your being here when I supposed you were a governess down in Dorsetshire! Didn't you go there as you expected? or did they turn out horrid, grumpy people without breeding? And what is the matter, Tessa? Do you want money? I have spent only about half of my quarterly allowance, which is wonderful; but then mamma only paid the money to me yesterday, and I really haven't had time to spend it. There was the loveliest violet silk I was looking at—but what am I talking about? All the money I have is at your service, Tessa."

"Thank you, Charlotte," answered Tessa, gratefully. "But I don't want money. I desire a home."

Miss Hamlyn looked puzzled.

"Then you didn't go to Dorsetshire?" she said. "Where is that tall, lank, tallow-faced clerk who was so good to you, he whom I thought the dearest, dearest hero—till I saw him. You haven't quarrelled with him?"

"No, indeed!" cried Tessa, her little pale face reddening. "But I can't stay at his house any longer, and I want a friend. Will you keep a secret if I tell you one, Lotty?"

"Try me," said Miss Hamlyn, delighted at the prospect of becoming the depositary of an actual

secret. "I can be closer than the Bank of England when I try. Why, I never told mamma till this day of the delightful flirtation I had with that young bookseller at Clapham—and it is perhaps as well for me that I did not," she added, meditatively. "If I had told her, I dare say she would have shut me up on bread and water for a week. I don't believe mamma was ever young. But tell me your secret, you darling Tessa. I will be as silent as those horrid wooden statues of Gog and Magog in Guildhall!"

Thus reassured, Tessa told her story from the moment of her parting with her friend.

Miss Hamlyn listened in a species of stupefaction, breaking in now and then with an exclamation of wonder and surprise. Knowing the sterling goodness of her friend, and that she was thoroughly to be depended upon, and yearning for sympathy under her burden, Tessa was drawn on and on until she had told of her father and her obnoxious suitor, of her noble young lover, Sir Victor Cheswick, and of her titled and aristocratic mother, whose name, however, she suppressed.

"Why, it is like a play!" cried Miss Charlotte when Tessa had concluded. "You have run away from your ogre father and your ogre lover, and even from that delightful young baronet! You always were a girl of spirit, Tessa. Why, you are a regular heroine of romance. You want me, I suppose, to keep you at The Dingle, while your enemies and your lover are scouring the kingdom for you!"

"If you only would, Charlotte."

Miss Hamlyn reflected.

"Mamma must not suspect a word of this," she said, thoughtfully. "She is the most obstinate, old-fashioned, punctilious lady in England, and, you see, she has got the queerest ideas. She thinks the manners of Young England are horrid; she says young people don't show enough respect for their parents now-a-days. When she, or her grandmother, or somebody else, was young, the children—great grown men and women, you understand—had to pop up out of their chairs when their parents entered the room, and had to stand up until told that they might be seated. I tell mamma that life must have been dreadful in those days. Blessed were the orphans! But mamma says that she wishes the Prime Minister, or the Lord Chancellor—who is it that makes the laws?—you are so clever, you know, Tessa—she says she wishes they would make a law to bring back those old customs. If they did, I'd move out of England, I would indeed!" and Miss Hamlyn's eyes flashed. "But, as I was saying, mamma would be perfectly horrified if she knew you had run away from your father, and she would send you back to him handcuffed, I daresay, and under close guard!"

"But he is not like any other father," said Tessa. "He hates me, and conspires against me!"

"A father is a father, as mamma would say, whether he is good or bad," said Miss Hamlyn. "So don't speak a word about your history, though it is so delightfully romantic. I've told mamma all that you confided to me about yourself in your school-days. Of course you must stay at The Dingle, Tessa; but how shall we manage it? I can't have you as a visitor without explaining to mamma. I don't suppose you would be a governess any more, now that you have found out that you have a titled mother, and now that you have a baronet lover?"

"I expect to be a governess all my days, Lotty," said Tessa, sighing. "Does your mamma want a governess?"

"Yes, for the younger children. The governess left yesterday in a huff, because she couldn't put up with mamma's ways. Mamma is aggravating, Tessa. She often makes me wish I had never been born. Mamma advertised this morning in some of the papers for a governess, and the house has been full of applicants all day. I have it, Tessa. Come with me to mamma's room, and apply for the situation. You will be sure to get it if I speak a good word for you. Stay; I'll go up to mamma in advance and pave the way for you."

Tessa assented, and the gushing but warm-hearted Miss Charlotte hurried upstairs to the parlour, where Mrs. Hamlyn sat in state to receive and examine applicants for the important post of governess in her family.

The lady was nearly exhausted with the many calls she had received, and was in an irritable mood, owing to the fact that she had not as yet engaged a governess. Her emancipated children were holding high riot over her head, and she found some relief in continually ringing her bell and despatching a much-enduring servant with messages to the nurse and children demanding less noise.

Miss Charlotte, finding her mother in a mood bordering on desperation, informed her that another applicant for the vacant situation had arrived; that the new-comer was Miss Tessa Holm, Charlotte's late school-fellow at Clapham; that Miss Holm was

accomplished, very clever, well bred, with manners that all the young ladies at school had vainly tried to imitate. Miss Holm was of illustrious lineage, Miss Charlotte vaguely hinted, and her mother "had been" a lady of quality. Altogether it might be years before so desirable a governess could be found to form the minds and manners of the young Hamlyns.

"I think I shall like her," said Mrs. Hamlyn, overpowered by her daughter's description. "Bring her up, Lotty."

Miss Charlotte, in great delight, returned to Tessa and escorted the young girl upstairs, ushering her into Mrs. Hamlyn's presence.

"My mother—Miss Holm," said Miss Lotty, simply.

Tessa acknowledged the introduction with grave self-possession. She was not shy in the presence of strangers, being without undue self-consciousness. Mrs. Hamlyn was surprised with the appearance of the beautiful, graceful young lady, who was so complete a foil to her own plain daughter, but Tessa's air and manner impressed her favourably, and she bore in mind Charlotte's hints in regard to Miss Holm's lineage.

She bade Tessa be seated, and questioned her about her acquirements and accomplishments, and asked for references. Tessa replied by referring the lady to the Misses Lacy, which she thought she might safely do. She was right in this, for Mrs. Hamlyn asked for references merely as a form, and did not purpose putting herself to the trouble of writing to the Misses Lacy to obtain information which she supposed she knew already.

Mrs. Hamlyn was stout and worldly, as we have said, and was somewhat past middle-age. Her chief object in life now was to settle her daughters well. She was a sallow-faced lady, with hard, black eyes, and wore a widow's cap, and a dress of bombazine heavily trimmed with jet. She had an austere countenance, which confirmed Tessa in her resolution not to confide in her.

Miss Hamlyn requested the young governess to play upon the piano and tease for her, and when Tessa had complied she expressed herself well pleased, and engaged the young applicant on the spot, at a salary of thirty pounds a year, which she seemed to consider manifest, and Tessa was in no position to refuse it.

The sum was certainly much less than she had a right, with her accomplishments, to expect; but then, as Mrs. Hamlyn reminded her, she was young and inexperienced, and should be content with a small salary.

"It is settled then," said Mrs. Hamlyn, languidly. "You had better stay now that you are here, Miss Holm. You can send for your luggage, Charlotte, show Miss Holm to her room, and to the school-room, and introduce her to the children. Your duties, Miss Holm, will commence in the morning. Charlotte, order that no more applicants for the situation be admitted."

She dismissed her daughter and the new governess with a wave of her hand, and Tessa was fairly installed in her new home.

(To be continued.)

### UNCLE PHIL'S RUSE.

"You are quite sure you love her, my boy?"

"Love her? Why, uncle, I adore her! How could I help it, seeing her every evening for three months past, and listening to her sweet voice? If you knew her, uncle, you would not ask such a question. To know her is to love her—my beautiful, charming Isabel!"

"Are you perfectly certain that you know her, Frank?" asked Uncle Phil, with a comical smile.

"Have I not told you, uncle, that every evening for nearly three months past has been spent with her?"

"Yes, that may be, and still you may not know her. Whenever you have been with her she has been expecting you or some other young fellow that she intended to charm. So you are acquainted with the bairn and beauty Miss Isabel Courtney; but, my boy, have you ever called upon her during the day when she was not prepared for visitors?"

"No, sir, I have not; but—"

"Never mind. Wait until I finish, then you can go on with your rhapsodies. Well, Frank, you'll never know her until you see her only with her home folks. See and know the daughter and sister, then tell me you know Isabel Courtney the woman; if after that you are still as much in love, and determined to marry her, I shall have to yield. You have not committed yourself?"

"No, uncle, although hundreds of times I have been on the eve of throwing myself at her feet and declaring my love. My promise given you never to marry without consulting you has restrained me. But really, uncle, I think you are rather too parti-

cular. I imagine it is this that has kept you single all this time. You have never been able to find perfection, or any woman coming up to your standard of what a woman should be."

"No, my boy. You are mistaken. I've known many very lovely women fully up to my ideal. But, Frank, the memory of one in Heaven—the first, the last, the only loved—is dearer to me than any living woman can ever be; and, looking forward to a union with her in the world beyond, I am waiting the time when I shall be called to find her," answered Uncle Phil, his voice grown softer and sinking lower.

Frank, ever impulsive, started up, clasped his uncle's hand, and exclaimed:

"Forgive me, uncle, if I have wounded you."

"No, my boy, you have not. Now to return to the subject so important to you. I am glad you have not told Miss Courtney of your affection, or, rather, of your temporary infatuation."

A frown darkened Frank's handsome face, and he turned impatiently away.

"Ah, now it is my turn to say 'forgive me.' But really, Frank, if you will reflect—let your mind go back only six months—you will admit I have good reason for speaking as I do. Remember Mary Fulton. Every evening found you beside her. Dear little girl! I was making myself quite happy with the hope of ending my days with her as your wife, Frank. You were loud in your praises of her until you met Miss Courtney."

"Yes, uncle, I know it. I did and do still think Mary a very lovable little girl, but—"

"Well, boy, out with it. But what?"

"Well, uncle, Mary is pretty, gentle, sweet-tempered, and, no doubt, would make a good wife. But—ah!"

"Ah, my boy, I see you are a little ashamed to tell your objections."

"No, sir, not at all. You must readily agree with me that Mary is not the wife for a man in such a position as I hold. I'm expected to entertain a great deal of company, and am thrown much into fashionable society. Now Mary is such a home-spun little thing, so very domestic. I want a woman with grace, dignity, and ease, to preside at my entertainments—one I shall be proud of. Now, uncle, you have the whole truth."

"So my dear little Mary, with her artlessness, natural grace, and acquirements—which should be considered accomplishments—is cast aside for a fashionable butterfly. Ah, Frank, I fear you are not likely to secure happiness by this decision."

"Uncle, I never once, during the month I visited Mary, said one word of love to her."

"Words of love may not; but what did your actions tell, Frank—your looks? I understood them, as did she, and everybody else who saw you with her. You have not behaved just right, Frank."

"If I have won from Mary more than a friendly regard, uncle, I am very sorry. I really thought I loved her until I saw Isabel; and still I have a warm regard for her."

"Well, well, my boy, I hope everything may turn out for the happiness of all. Now I've a little plan to suggest, which, if you will agree to it, I think will make you better acquainted with your lady-love's true character; also with that of Mary. After which, if you come again to me, and tell me you still wish to marry Miss Courtney, I will no longer oppose you."

"Well, uncle, knowing that you will not suggest anything which a man of honour should hesitate about, I'll consent," answered Frank.

Uncle Phil, closing the library door, proceeded to disclose his plan.

Frank listened until his uncle had concluded, then, after a merry laugh, he said:

"All right. I've no doubt of the result. But really, uncle, I had no idea you were such a plotter. You have missed your vocation, I truly think."

"Au revoir," said Frank that night, after having accompanied Isabel home from a ball.

She had seemed more beautiful and charming than ever, and Frank, when he bade her good night, said to himself:

"To-morrow I shall be the happiest man living, or—Pshaw! I'm foolish to think for a moment of anything else. She will stand the test."

It was near noon of the next day that a hand cart, filled with beautiful plants, was stopped before Mr. Courtney's.

The man, ascending the steps, rang the bell and handed in a card, on which was written, "For Miss Courtney."

As the man stood waiting directions concerning the removal of the plants he heard a pleasant voice call:

"Isabel, dear, do come down," and the cross, irritable answer:

"I'm not ready, and it is no use to hurry me! You expect me to get down to breakfast when I did not retire until after midnight. I think you might have sent it up to me!"

There was a grieved look in the mother's eyes, a

slight quiver of her lips as she went to the foot of the stairs and said:

"It is not to come to breakfast. That has been over hours ago. Yours is waiting and is ready whenever you wish to have it. I called you to come and see the beautiful flowers some one has sent you, and to direct the man where you wish them placed."

"Oh!" she responded, in a muffled tone.

And a few moments after Miss Courtney came down.

If she had not been so intently admiring the flowers, she might have noticed the look of astonishment depicted on the face of the man waiting to do her bidding—and well there might be.

Could it be possible that this was the girl of whose beauty and sweetness so many praises were sung?

In a morning robe, dingy and soiled, caught up here and there by pins—substitution for stitching—neither belted nor corded, but flowing loosely and trailing round her, her front hair still in crimpers, the back caught in a tangled mass under a net, she presented not the slightest resemblance to the belle of the night before.

"Take them in, and place them in the windows of the dining-room for the present," Isabel said.

Going in herself, she dropped into a chair, saying:

"Mamma, tell some one to bring me my breakfast now."

"You will have to wait on yourself a little today, Isabel. The cook is ill, and Kitty has gone to market."

Before the mother concluded Isabel snapped out:

"It's always so when I am tired."

"Well, do not worry, dear. Here is your breakfast. Now eat it while it is warm, then I want you to assist me a little. Papa is going to bring a friend home to dinner, and we must try to have things just as nice as if our cook prepared them," said Mrs. Courtney, in a coaxing tone.

"Indeed, mamma, if you choose to worry over the dinner, I shall not. I'm not going to ruin my complexion, and make my hands rough, with such work. Besides, I have an engagement at two o'clock. Why could not papa take his friend to a restaurant?"

"My dear, when a gentleman has a home and family he expects—"

"Expect! Yes, entirely too much. Men are always giving unnecessary trouble. When I have a home of my own I will have my husband understand that he cannot—"

Isabel was suddenly stopped here by a crash; and, looking up, she exclaimed:

"Oh, you awkward wretch! You have broken the very prettiest rose!"

The man stopped not to pick up the fragments, or bring in the plants remaining in the entry; but, pulling his slouched hat farther over his face, rushed from the room and house.

"Oh, Isabel, how could you speak so! You frightened that poor man. My child, you should try and control yourself. You can be so pleasant at times," the mother said.

Isabel answered:

"Mamma, we neither of us have time for a lecture just now."

Her mother turned with a weary, sad look, and left the room.

The same morning, an hour later, Mary Fulton sat at the window of the pretty, cozy little sitting-room. The movements of the needle, which a few moments before she had plied so swiftly, suddenly ceased, and her hands dropped on the work in her lap. Her sweet face had a plaintive expression, which deepened as she sat so busy with thoughts, which were far from happy ones surely, for the pretty red lips quivered like a grieved child's. Quickly she dashed away a tear and said:

"This will never do. Mamma will soon be in, and in an instant her loving eye will detect the trace of even one tear. I must not grieve her. But, oh! wonder what I did to change his feelings towards me? I was so sure he loved me that I let my poor heart slip from my own keeping. True, he never told me of his love save by looks and acts. These last three months have seemed as years, during which I have seen him only twice, and on each occasion with a beautiful girl—the girl, most likely, who has really won his heart. Well, well, I must conquer this affection. But this is not the surest way. I must be busy all the time, giving regrets no chance to linger with me."

Again her fingers were busy with her needle. How pretty she looked in her neat chintz morning dress, with snowy collar, cuffs and apron, her bright brown hair, her wavy tresses, confined by a blue ribbon.

A few moments more, and she started up, saying:

"I must find something to do more active than sewing."

Just then a peal came from the door bell, and very soon after the servant entered, saying:

"Oh, Miss Mary, come to the door and see the beautiful flowers the man says are for you."

Mary hastened out, to receive from the man a

card, on which was written, "For Miss Fulton, No. 22, Waverley Street."

"How beautiful! Who could have sent them? I suppose there can be no mistake. This is my name and number," Mary said, again glancing at the card.

The man expressed his knowledge of the flowers having reached the one for whom they were intended by immediately unloading his cart and taking its contents into the hall.

Just then Mrs. Fulton came in from a walk. Mary stopped admiring the flowers and followed her mother into the sitting-room, wondering anew who could have sent the beautiful present.

"Shall the man place them in the windows, he says, Miss Mary?" the servant asked.

"Thank him, and say, if he has the time to spare," Mary answered.

Immediately after the man began to bring in and arrange the plants.

"How soon you have returned, mamma. Surely you did not get through your shopping?" Mary said, removing her mother's wrappings, and gently seating her in an easy-chair.

"Yes, love, I came back much sooner than I expected, to bring you a disappointment, I fear, as well as making you very busy to-day. When I reached your father's office I found there an old friend and schoolfellow of his. I thought papa's eyes were asking as plainly as could be for me to invite him to dine with us to-day, so I did; and the gentleman readily accepted my invitation. When I was coming away papa followed me to the door, and said he was so glad I had asked his friend to our home. So I turned back to set you to hard work, never reflecting until a few moments since that you had an engagement for the afternoon," answered Mrs. Fulton.

"Never mind my engagement. I shall be glad to stay at home and be busy, to make dear papa happy. I can send a note of excuse to my friend, then to work. Mamma, we will have a dinner papa will be proud of."

Just then came a bang, crash!

Mary turned quickly to see, lying on the carpet, the fragments of a pot, and near by the scattered dirt, some still clinging to the roots of a rare rose in full bloom.

Mary might well have been excused if she had evinced a little ill-temper; but she did not. The shade of regret which gathered for an instant on her face quickly passed away, and, when the man picked up the rose and began to mutter some excuse or apology, Mary said:

"Never mind. I hope the rose is not injured much; and, if it is, I must not grumble about the accident, for I am still very rich in the possession of so many beautiful ones."

The last flower was placed in the window, and, as the door closed on the man, Mary said:

"Poor fellow, I really pitied him! He was so awkward, and seemed either so frightened or bashful that he could not raise his eyes."

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"Well, Frank, my boy, the time has expired. Am I to bestow a fitting bridal present upon your chosen one? I've been anxiously expecting to hear from you for several days past. I shall be true to my word. Am I to give my consent to and blessing on your union with Miss Courtney?"

"No, sir."

"No, sir! Why not?"

"Because I've asked Mary Fulton to be my wife."

"What? Indeed! Hurrah! Oh, Frank, you are all right now. How happy we shall all be! But tell me how you so suddenly recovered your senses. I had not expected my little plan to accomplish so sudden a cure," said Uncle Phil, clasping Frank's hand and shaking it warmly.

"Oh, uncle, spare me a recitation from the first peep behind the scenes. Sufficient to say, I thank you for saving me from 'a leap in the dark,'" said Frank, with a grave face.

Isabel never ceased watching and waiting for Frank's return to her side, until she saw his marriage announced; then she could never imagine what it was that made her lose him. If she could have known that the awkward cartman was the exquisite Frank the mystery would have been solved.

Many times, during the days of their pleasant courtship, Mary would ask Frank why he came not for those long months to see her. And when he answered by telling of the pressure of business, of course she didn't believe him, but continued to tease him to tell her until the day before their union, when, I suppose, thinking it better to begin wedded life with a clear conscience, he told her of Uncle Phil's ruse.

Doubtless dear old man became after that. And when, a year after, a baby boy rested in Mary's arms she called him little Phil. Frank was not jealous a bit, hoping his son might be as good and wise as Uncle Phil.

F. H. B.



[THE OUTCAST'S LEGACY.]

## FLOSSIE.

It was a very singular thing to impose such a journey upon me. Yet I did not fully realize how odd it was until I found myself standing beside Philip Drexel's sick bed, and saw his start of astonishment at perceiving that a young, handsome woman, and a stranger, had come to him in his last illness, as the representative of mother and sister and home.

"I am very sorry, Mr. Drexel, to be obliged to tell you that your mother found it impossible to make the journey, and commissioned me to do everything in my power for your comfort," I stammered. "I am accustomed to illness," I hastened to add, "and hope you will feel entirely free to call upon me."

My words seemed for a moment to make no impression. He looked at me with glazed, weary eyes.

"Then none of them would come," he murmured; "the only legacy I have to leave could not tempt them. Heaven grant, Miss Mount," he said, hoarse with passion, "that the blessing of this legacy may be for you who have come to receive it, and its bitterness for those who stand aloof."

I shuddered involuntarily at his malignant intensity. I did not fully know whether he was rational still or not; I comprehended nothing about the legacy. But I understood, as I glanced around the comfortless room, and looked at the handsome features of the man who was dying in his prime, through his own dissipations, why Mrs. Drexel could not bring her selfish heart to the task of confronting her first-born in his extremity.

"I have been an outcast for years," continued Philip Drexel. "I have refrained from insulting my family with my presence, or from taxing them for assistance. But I thought they would not disregard this last appeal."

"I think, Mr. Drexel, your mother hardly realized how ill you were."

"She knows that I am dying," he said, briefly.

Almost mechanically I had removed my hat and begun to arrange the accumulated plates and phials which indicated that the room had not been set in order for several days.

"No matter about that," said Philip Drexel. How easy to see he was his mother's son when he spoke to command. "The time is precious and brief. In the first place, who are you, Miss Mount?"

"I am Mrs. Drexel's governess."

"Ah! not even a friend? An *employée*?" How the hateful Drexel pride writhed, like a serpent, in the words.

"Yes—an *employée*. It happened to be my vacation, so I could be sent to you without loss to my pupils, you see."

"I see. Pardon me. I ought to be grateful that you were sent at all."

"I think you ought."

"And still more grateful," he continued, with his keen, haggard eyes overlooking me, "that you are what you are—a lady."

I towered with my own pride then.

"I dare say, Mr. Drexel, that my capacity will be found equal to what may be required of me. Allow me to say now that I think you are over-exerting yourself. If you will permit me, I will arrange your room to make you comfortable for the night."

"Comfortable!" No language can convey the expression with which he repeated the word. "Do they—do you suppose that I humbled myself in this last extremity in order to be made comfortable? Let the room go, Miss Mount; it is good enough for me to die in. We have some business to transact, then I wish you to see her."

"Who, Mr. Drexel?"

"Flossie, Miss Mount; my little Flossie. Will you open that closet door?"

I did as he requested, and opened the door into a large clothespress. Perched upon a pile of boxes sat a child of three or four years of age, trembling vio-

lently. She was sallow and meagre, but her black eyes were beautiful, and the profusion of flaxen hair in which she was hidden was a dower of beauty.

"Flossie, darling," said Philip Drexel, "I want you to come down and see this lady."

The tenderness of his tone was something wonderful.

The little creature obeyed him, and I carried her to the bedside. He put his arms up feebly to receive her.

"Miss Mount," he said, with grim irony, "this is my legacy. May she bring a blessing to you who receive her, and bitterness to those who stand aloof."

He strained her to his breast.

"You are kinder to us after all," he added, "than any of them would have been. May Heaven reward you."

I sat beside Philip Drexel's bed that night, answering his feverish questions, and listening to his impatient complaints, while the little girl slept beside him.

As the early summer dawn crept through the fog which overhung the city he dropped asleep, and I dozed in my chair.

Something roused me suddenly. I sprang up. The dying man sat upright and rigid in his bed.

"Have you brought money," he gasped, "to bury me?"

"Yes."

How dreadful to tell him that they had sent money for that purpose when they would have refused it for any other.

"Ah," he sighed with relief. "Put a black dress on Flossie. May the blessing—"

His voice died in a gurgle. He stretched his limbs convulsively once or twice. The gray glare of death stole over his face, and the shell and the soul were sundered.

I telegraphed to the family that their son was dead, and that I should return with his little daughter immediately after the funeral. I fulfilled his last request of putting a black dress on little Flossie, and she and I alone followed handsome, brilliant Philip Drexel to his grave. Then there was no more to keep us, and accompanied by Flossie I started to return whence I had come.

It was a long ride, and we neared our destination at the close of a sultry August day. I don't think my nature is over-sympathetic. There was perhaps as much of contempt as of pity in my feelings towards the poor little waif who was thrown so young upon the world's cold mercies. I recollect that I speculated upon her reception by her father's friends as she lay asleep with her flaxen curls drifting over her little sad black dress, unknowing how curiously she was to be henceforth interwoven with my destiny, and how the happiness and misery of my future were balanced in her.

The train stopped. I roused Flossie, gathered my satchels and shawls, stepped upon the platform, and looked about for some of the family. Apparently no one had come to meet us. The fact was embarrassing, for Drexel Heights were two miles away, and no public conveyance came to this byo-station. In fact, almost before I could look about me the train moved onward, and I found myself alone, the signalman only in sight, and he moving away down the path.

The sun had already sunk behind the mountains, upon whose peaks hung thunder-clouds of sulphurous vapour; the air was deliciously moist and sweet; the shadows of the stately trees made twilight in the valley. But for my little charge I should have liked nothing better than the steep two-mile walk to Drexel Heights. But with her what should I do? And a kind of resentful impatience stole over me. The errand upon which I had been was certainly no part of the duties for which I had been hired and was paid. They might at least have attended to my reception on my return from burying their dead.

"Are you very tired, Flossie?" I inquired of my little companion as it forced itself upon me that there was nothing to do but proceed.

"Only very hungry, Miss Mount," she answered.

"Poor child; I ought to have brought some biscuits."

"And milk too, Miss Mount," she rejoined, with a relishing gesture at the mere idea.

I stood and pondered.

"Flossie, if you thought you could walk a little way—about a half-mile—to Mrs. Hunt's, we could get some supper, and even stay all night as it is getting so late."

"That would be nice. I will try."

Slinging my satchel over my shoulder, pedestrian-wise, I clasped Flossie's hand and started onward. The dark seemed to close upon us very suddenly, like the dropping of a curtain; low mutters of thunder resounded among the hills, and once or twice a forked flash of lightning crossed our path.

"It is going to rain, Flossie. Can't you hurry a little more?"

As I asked the question an angry roar came down through a gorge in the mountain, like the roar of a beast, the thunder shook the crags, the lightning wrote in jagged lines of fire among the pines, darkness closed like a dome above our heads, and the rain began to fall.

Flossie trembled without uttering a word. For my own part, I had no taste for exposure to one of these Highland thunderstorms. For an instant we two stood motionless; then, with a swift impulse and the strength of excitement, I lifted the child in my arms and pressed up the road.

It was not very long before my strained ear detected, amid the sounds of the storm, an approaching footstep—a man's step it seemed by itsplash and stride.

The loneliness of my situation was bad enough, but strange companionship still worse. I carried what few valuables I possessed in my satchel, and the helplessness of my position forced itself upon me.

The steps were rapidly overtaking me. I thought for a moment of plunging into the bushes by the roadside. Flossie seemed to feel the contagion of my fright, and clasped my neck tightly. By this time the rain fell in torrents, the darkness was intense, the steps close at hand. Then for an instant a protracted flash of lightning illuminated the scene. I saw a man's form, a slouched, dripping hat, cavalry boots, a trout basket.

"My good woman," he inquired, "can you tell me if there is shelter anywhere near?"

I started; his voice gave me a strange thrill. It was like a voice out of my past—that far-off past of two years ago.

"We are quite near a farmhouse, sir. I expect every moment to see the lights."

It seemed to me that the man, too, started. We feel rather than see such things.

"You are carrying a child. Let me take it," he said as we pressed side by side along.

"I will not trouble you. Why, surely, this is the gate."

We had indeed reached Mrs. Hunt's gate, but the house was unlighted. Its mistress was absent, perhaps detained by the storm. We must, at all events, find shelter, and we proceeded unceremoniously to effect an entrance.

After considerable and diligent search some matches were found, and, laying Flossie upon the couch, I turned to look at my companion. His eyes were fastened upon me.

"Lois Mount!" he exclaimed, reproach and astonishment being expressed in his tone.

I drew my breath in, put forth my hand, and blessed my constitutional composure.

"Mr. De Wint!"

"What a strange meeting."

"Almost as stormy as our parting."

"Did you expect ever to see me again?"

"I hoped not to."

"Why?"

"Because, having associated with you as an equal, I have no taste for appearing before you as belonging to an inferior class."

"Inferior? You are superior to any princess I ever saw."

"Nevertheless I am Mrs. Drexel's governess. And I know you, Mr. De Wint."

"You suppose that it was owing to my discovery of your position that I left you so suddenly two years since?"

"Of course."

"You are mistaken."

"What else could it be?"

"Somewhen I will tell you."

I had opened Mrs. Hunt's cupboard, poured into a cup some milk from a bowl, and was holding it for tired, famished little Flossie.

"I did not think you were so fond of children, Miss Mount."

It was a simple thing for him to say, but it revealed to me what had been a mystery hitherto—the reason why, after a fortnight of devoted attention two years before, a fortnight into which all the bloom and glory of my life had been crowded, he had, without excuse or explanation, suddenly left the party with whom we were both travelling, I as governess, he as guest.

It was something, I had always known, in a conversation which occurred between us the night before that had prompted his sudden action. I had, in that conversation, made two statements. One was that I was Mrs. Davenant's governess; that I thereby earned my own living, and that I was proud to do so.

"I am afraid that you are a little bit strong-minded," Mr. De Wint had replied to my assertions.

"I hope I am enough so to feel perfect independence in my work."

"I am glad you have chosen a work which is so womanly as teaching."

"I don't think woman's work is limited except by

her capacity. I am going to write and lecture when my mind ripens a little more."

I remember Frederic De Wint's look; it was more than his words. Yet they were angry enough. He said something to the effect that women with such sentiments were a grosser sham than Homer's Syrens, for these lured the body only to destruction; but women who wanted a public sphere, and still allowed themselves to be wooed as wives, stabbed the very soul of domestic happiness.

He said that, then added, with a superb look, and in a tone which could never be explained:

"It was unaware till this morning that you were Mrs. Davenant's governess."

And he turned away.

I had found it comparatively easy to set aside his score for my principles, but his contempt for my position was humiliating indeed. It helped me, though, to crush the love which he had roused in my heart, helped me above any farther weak craving for happiness, set me where I could think of culture, self-development, and all those lofty things which have such tempting names.

Now, to-night, so strangely met, his words reversed the decision I had taken. He left me solely because he thought I was unwomanly in my independence. I was stronger at twenty-one than at nineteen. I said to myself, "Let him go." I faced him calmly.

"Did you not think I was fond of children, Mr. De Wint? Our acquaintance was somewhat superficial. Did you suspect you had mastered all my tastes?"

"I was certainly not quite so presumptuous," he replied, and winced a little.

I was generous enough when generosity was within my power. It was easier for me to give than to receive.

"You know at least that I have a taste for rendering myself disagreeable when the occasion serves," I said, with a reconciling smile.

"My opinion of all your tastes has changed somewhat since our last meeting, Lois."

I looked at him quickly.

"I have longed to find you—to tell you so," he said. "I have tried to forget you, to dislike you, Lois. It has been impossible."

"I am very glad of that. It is embarrassing to be forgotten and disliked."

"Would it be pleasant to know that you were remembered and beloved?"

He was very serious. I saw. The tumult which Frederic De Wint's words had roused before filled my heart. But I said:

"It would not be pleasant to have you tell me so to-night. We have proved ourselves mistaken in each other in the past. Let us beware of mistakes in the future. I am cowardly about pain. I do not like to suffer. Remember, we knew each other only for so short a time."

"Does it not prove my sincerity that I have been seeking you ever since?"

"Yet you must feel a certain mistrust of me. My sentiments were so obnoxious to you once."

"I confess it. But I am ready to stake my love against them."

"And if you should find that they did not yield to your love, would you think them incompatible with loving?"

"Lois, do not tantalize me any more. Will you marry me, and make me happy?"

"I am not sure that I could."

"Is that my refusal?"

I got up and opened the door. The storm was over. The moonlight lay white against the pines. I staked the love I bore Frederic De Wint against the risk I ran in loving him. I said:

"Let us wait a little—let us see more of one another."

"How can we?"

"Will it mortify you to visit Drexel Heights as my friend?"

"Lois!"

The night was cool as it grew late. I wrapped a blanket about Flossie and kindled a few sticks on the hearth. In their blaze and fragrance Frederic De Wint and I sat and talked. Day came at last. I tore a leaf from my note-book, wrote a few lines of explanation for Mrs. Hunt, roused Flossie, and parted from Mr. De Wint, who returned to his camp where he was spending a few weeks with a party of sportsmen.

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I had time for a thorough toilet before the break-fast bell rang at Drexel Heights.

When I led Flossie into the room, made my formal explanations, and received in return the information that no despatch had been received announcing my return, I felt some way metamorphosed. I doubted whether last night's adventure and the appearance of Frederic De Wint were not a dream.

The Drexels, without guests, were not an interesting family. Mrs. Drexel and Irene took no pains to render themselves agreeable to me or one another.

They believed in reserving their fascinations. Mr. Drexel was always absorbed in his books, and the younger children quarrelled over their muffins. This morning, however, they were discussing a topic of general interest—the arrangements for a summer ball. Could it be possible, I thought, that they intend to give a ball so soon after the death of a near relative? As if in reply to my unexpressed astonishment, Irene's eyes happened to fall just then upon Flossie's dress.

"Who, pray, put that child in mourning?" she inquired.

"It was her father's request," I replied.

"Oh, his authority ought to prevail, certainly, with the family he honoured."

"Irene!"

Even Mrs. Drexel was shocked. She could pardon almost anything but this to her spoiled, beautiful daughter.

"It is very well to say 'Irene,' but of course her dress must be changed at once. It would hardly be proper to give a ball with a member of the family in mourning."

"I almost think we had better give up the ball this year," Mrs. Drexel rejoined. "I am sure people will talk."

"No one knows a word about it," said Irene, "and no one need know. My dress is made, and there are a dozen reasons why I am determined upon this ball."

She came to my room by-and-by, and found Flossie looking at my album.

"Why don't you send her to the nursery, Miss Mount? I hope you are not going to begin to make a pet of her. Let her go away now, please. I want to talk to you. It was in regard to this ball that I wanted some advice," said Irene. "And I want to tell you why I am so determined upon it this month. There are a party of gentlemen camping out in the vicinity, whom it will be so nice to invite. More than all this, I have determined upon a conquest of one of this party."

"Poor victim," I said, with a smile.

"Well, I am not sure that he is to be pitied. For, to tell you the truth, Miss Mount, I shall marry him if I can. I have been in love with him for a year, though I have never yet made his acquaintance. His reserve is perfectly fascinating. I want you to see him in order to judge of and approve my taste. His person is magnificent, his mind brilliant, his fortune ample, and as for his social position—well, I am talking of Frederic De Wint."

I felt a sort of numbness, followed by a rush of sensations I cannot describe. My heart beat painfully. Irene Drexel was a rival to be dreaded. A lovelier woman it would be hard to find. Beautiful, with consummate skill in managing her charms, heiress to a large fortune, surrounded by all the attractions of luxury. I enumerated her allurements mechanically. Then I rejoiced that the test was to come. I felt the need of an ordeal; here it was. If Frederic De Wint could withstand Rene Drexel I might love him safely.

Several days passed, and I still heard nothing from Mr. De Wint. I knew that Irene and her father rode to the camp one day and gave the invitations to the ball. I see her now as she rode back with a flush of exultation in her sparkling eyes and a rare bloom on her cheeks.

The night came for the ball; a scented, starlit summer evening. I put on the one costume which served me for all state occasions, a heavy black silk trimmed with old lace, and my Naples corals. Irene was exquisite in her blue crepe with scarlet poppies. I took my seat quietly where I could observe the guests enter.

Mr. De Wint and his party came rather late. I saw Irene detain him in her graceful fashion, and saw his eye glance restlessly around the room till it discovered me. How courteous and graceful, what a prince among men he was! I had time to think this as he made his way towards me.

"This has been a long fortnight, Lois. I was afraid I should not see you even to-night. Are you quite well?"

"Certainly."

"But you have been ill?"

"Not at all."

"I was told so."

"By whom, pray?"

"By Miss Drexel. I have called here several times, and on each occasion have failed to see you. What does it mean?"

It crossed my mind that if Mr. De Wint had made it manifest that he really wished to see me he would not have been denied. Doubtless his inquiries had been so cool that Irene supposed them to have been accidental, and had excused me to him, as I habitually requested to be excused from others.

"Perhaps it means that we have met soon enough," I answered.

Irene was coming towards us with a gentleman

whom she introduced to me as Mr. Houston. He asked me to dance, and I took his arm. Presently I noticed Irene and Mr. De Wint in another set. I tormented myself with calculations as to whether I had been too cool and repelling. But after all, I argued, Frederic De Wint well knows that it is only to preserve my self-respect that I am so. I have suffered enough through his pride already. I will not subject myself to the charge of courting his attentions. Irene Drexel may stoop to conquer, but I cannot afford to do so.

Irene that night did stoop to conquer. Her every word and look was the most seductive flattery. I repeated to myself that if Frederic De Wint could withstand her I might love him with safety. But was she not irresistible?

The hours passed, and she kept him chained to her side. I would not shrink away and break my heart for his neglect, as I had done once before. I felt my cheeks flame, my eyes glow like fire. I danced and laughed, and was as little like my own self as was possible. Some one inquired how long I had been staying at Drexel Heights? They had not known that Miss Irene had a guest.

"I am Mrs. Drexel's governess," I said, calmly. They were all going at length. Mr. De Wint came to me with a scarlet poppy in his button-hole, to say good night.

"You have chosen your colours well," I said, in a bitter tone of banter.

"What do you mean?"  
"Your flower means—oblivion."  
"It is you, Lois, who are oblivious. How strangely you have treated me to-night."

"Do you mean that as a complaint?"  
"I don't suppose I have any right to complain of you, have I?"  
"I can't tell."

"Lois, come into the garden with me for a few moments. I want to talk with you."

He drew my hand within his arm and held it. In the confusion of breaking up, and the departure of the guests, our escape, as I supposed, was unnoticed. The damp starlit night was very gracious to my hot cheeks and panting heart.

"Lois, are we never to understand each other?"  
"That is what we have still to discover."

"We shall never discover it if you are not straightforward!"

"You, at least, are straightforward."  
"I don't know what I am."  
"I believe you. You don't know at this moment whether you are in love with Irene Drexel or with me."

He did not like the thrust.  
"You make the matter somewhat doubtful," he said.

"Let us put one another out of suspense in some way," I answered.

"I am willing, Lois."

"Well then—"

"Well then—you do not love me? you will not take my love?"

"I would not pick up the love of a king if it were thrown to me like alms. Good night, Mr. De Wint."

I wrenched my hand from his arm and sped from him along the avenue of lindens to the house. Not a guest remained. Irene, too, was gone; Mrs. Drexel was overseeing the servants who extinguished the lights. No one noticed me as I passed to my room.

I was grateful that school duties began the following day. The necessity for exertion braced me. I controlled myself all through those five long hours, then, relaxing utterly, I locked my door and sat at the window whence I could watch the guests who came and went. It was not unusual to see Frederic De Wint among them.

All this time one creature clung to me with a mute, dejected sympathy which would not be repelled. It was little Flossie.

When I would allow her she followed me into my room after school, where she curled herself wistfully in a corner, never breaking the silence. Otherwise she lingered awhile outside my door, and finally went off to the drawing-rooms and piazzas. She had no taste for playing with the other children, and was so unobtrusive that she was never repulsed from among the grown folks. She had taken a keen liking for Mr. De Wint since her adventurous acquaintance with him on the night of our arrival, and by-and-bye I began to discover that he noticed and talked with her. I had no reason, though, for thinking but that he had done well to put Irene's red poppy in his button-hole; no hint that he was not content to be Miss Drexel's suitor. She herself told me that he came in that capacity. I never had grounds for supposing that she had detected our intimacy, except that she took such pains to inform me of the progress of hers. She always gave Mr. De Wint the title bestowed upon him on the night when we discussed her proposed conquest—"her victim."

"Is Mr. De Wint really your victim?" I asked, one day.

"A very willing one, too. He is urging me already to be married."

"Already?"  
I could not help it that a pain shot through my heart.

"Yes. It appears to be very soon. But I have promised for December. I should like you to be bridesmaid number four, Lois. You know you have never seemed to us like a governess."

Little Flossie said that night:

"I think that Aunt Rene has coaxed Mr. De Wint to be married, instead of his coaxing her."

"Why, Flossie, what do you mean?"  
"Oh, I heard what she said to-day, and I've heard her talk often. I've been curled up in the dark on a sofa where she thought nobody was there, and I've heard her go on."

"Why, Flossie?"  
"Yes, indeed. First he talked about you a great deal. Aunt Rene told him how bad she felt because your heart was broken. Is your heart broken, Miss Mount? Because I like broken hearts if yours is. Aunt Rene said somebody jilted you. She said it had made you so calculating that all you cared for was money now. Do you, Miss Mount?"

"No, Flossie, not altogether."  
"I'm going to tell Mr. De Wint so, because I thought he felt bad at what Aunt Rene said."

"Oh, no, Flossie, you must not speak to a gentleman about such things."

Perhaps my eyes did not rebuke Flossie as much as my words, for she asked:  
"Did you ever answer Mr. De Wint's letter, Miss Mount?" The letter he gave Aunt Rene for you I mean?"

"Flossie, you must not talk about things which you don't understand."  
"But I do understand. Mr. De Wint gave Aunt Rene a letter one night, and she promised to give it to you. There was ever so much more about it. Somehow I thought you would be happier when you got that letter."

I know not what impulse overtook me, but I said:  
"What a queer little thing you are, Flossie. Mr. De Wint never sent me a letter in his life."

"Oh, yes, he did."  
"Well, I never got it, so it is all the same. Now run off and play, Flossie."

I said it was "all the same," but it was not. Flossie's words rang in my ears. Could it be that Irene Drexel was playing me false? that, under pretence of assisting Frederic De Wint's suit, she had misrepresented me and stolen his heart, or rather entrapped it in the rebound of indignation he felt at my apparent duplicity? But I would not indulge my poor, sore heart in even this questionable comfort. It was unlikely that proud Irene Drexel would play such a game. Then I had seen enough to know Frederic De Wint was as proud as Irene.

Mrs. Drexel came to my room one day with a request that I would accompany them on a picnic to one of the mountain plateaux whence the view was fine and the air delightful.

"We want an artist with us, you know, Miss Mount," she said, in allusion to my talent for sketching.

I gave her no encouragement, however. I did not mean to run the risk of letting my pale cheeks and sad eyes betray to Frederic De Wint how I was suffering. I saw the party depart when the morning came, and tried to think that I should enjoy the day all by myself. But after all I dreaded the very loneliness I coveted. In my loneliest heart I knew that I had thrown off my one chance of happiness for a trifling. A little less exacting, and I might have been blessed in Frederic De Wint's love.

I went after breakfast to the drawing-room, and opened the grand piano. I remember the glimpse of myself I caught in the long mirror. I was not fit for disappointment and drudgery. Nature intended me to rule and enjoy. I let my fingers stray among the keys, chording throbs of passion that trembled under my own touch as my heart did under its recollections.

Suddenly a step sounded on the verandah without; the casement was opened, and Frederic De Wint stood before me. I saw that his face was as changed as my own.

"This time, Lois, you will not get away from me," he said, gravely. "At least until I know all the truth."

I trembled with scorn.  
"By what right does Miss Irene Drexel's lover demand an interview with me?"

"If I am Irene Drexel's lover, it is because of your obduracy."

"It is fortunate you can console yourself for that so effectually."

"Lois," he said, "I have come here to be very patient with you, and patiently to learn the truth.

Why do you treat me as you do? Why may I not at least obtain a reply to my suit?"

"I gave you that when I told you that no man might stoop to love me; that I would not accept a heart which was offered as alms."

"You are alluding to old scores, but I am talking of later grievances. Why did you not answer the letter which Miss Drexel gave you from me?"

I sat as if petrified. It was true then, Flossie's story about the letter.

"I have never received a letter from you, Mr. De Wint," I replied.

"Lies!"

"Never."

"The child's story is true, then?"

"What story?"

"Lois, what a strange thing that that child should be the means of bringing us together."

"Flossie? What has she told you?"

"She told me—Heaven knows how she discovered it—that you never received a letter which I gave her aunt Rene, that you were very unhappy about it, that you were unhappy all the time."

I sat still and remembered how Philip Drexel had wished that his legacy might be my blessing and his sister's bitterness; strangely indeed it had come about.

I was calm enough then to talk with Mr. De Wint about our misunderstandings. I think we laid a foundation which should obviate a repetition of them.

When Irene came home we simply confronted her with the knowledge that her treachery was discovered. For Flossie's sake we were careful that she should not detect the means.

My heart was very tender of the little waif whose unconscious ministry had wrought glory out of gloom, and when I had been married several months I requested and obtained permission to become her guardian.

Irene Drexel is unmarried still, haughty and bitter. Since she could not have what she would she will accept nothing. For our parts, we bless more and more, as the years go by, Flossie's ministry.

W. H. P.

## FACETIA.

*A man drinks he generally grows reckless. In his case the more drams the fewer scruples.*

*A MAN who bumps his head against that of his neighbour isn't apt to think that two heads are better than one.*

*A LADY being asked by a gentleman, "What do you hold on the question of female suffrage?" replied, "I hold my tongue."*

*"PRAT, Miss C——," said a gentleman, one evening, "why are ladies so fond of officers?" "How stupid!" replied Miss C——. "Is it not natural and proper that a lady should like a good offer, sir?"*

*A WAUTOMA lover wrote to his sweetheart: "There is not a globule of blood in my heart that does not bear your photograph." A very reflective sort of fellow he must have been.*

*"HAV I not right to be saucy, if I please?" said a young lady of an old bachelor. "Yes, if you please; but not if you displease," was the reply.*

*A YOUNG lady recently married to a farmer one day visited the cow-house, when she thus interrogated her milk-maid: "By-the-bye, Mary, which of these cows is it that gives the butter-milk?"*

*A NEW drum has been invented, in which the head is made of steel instead of parchment. There is a fitness in this. Cold steel is more appropriate for so martial an instrument than the skin of the peaceful sheep.*

*A LITTLE girl having noticed that after her mother's toilet there was invariably a sprinkling of powder on the carpet, observed on seeing the snow the other morning, "See, mamma, the angels have been using the *poudre de riz*!"*

*A LADY in Birmingham complains that the first year of her married life her husband called her "my dear," the second "Mrs. A," and the third year "old sorrel top," which was too much for her to bear.*

*A SCHOOLMASTER in Bridgeport, Ct., who asked a small pupil of what the surface of the earth consists, and was promptly answered, "Land and water," varied the question slightly, that the fact might be impressed on the boy's mind, and asked, "What then do land and water make?" to which came the immediate response, "Mud."*

*A SUITABLE ANSWER.—The tailor who contracts for the supply of pauper uniforms to the — Union is a genius. The other day the guardians complained that not one of the inmates, in the imbecile ward particularly, had a suit of clothes of the right size for him. Skin's reply was that he had purposely made*

## THE LONDON READER.

ap the clothes in that manner in order to prevent the patients from having a fit.—*Fus.*

A MAN was arrested recently for stealing a barrel of salt. When arraigned in the court he pleaded destitution. "You couldn't eat salt," said the judge. "Oh, yes, I could, with the meat I intended to steal." This reply cost him six months. The judge had no appreciation of delicate humour.

A LAD arrested for theft, when taken before the magistrate and asked what his occupation was, frankly answered, "Stealing." "Your candour astonishes me!" said the judge. "I thought it would," replied the lad, "seeing how many big 'uns there are in the same business as is ashamed to own it!"

## SKETCHED AT ISLINGTON.

Purchaser: "K-A-T-L is no' the way to spell 'cattle.'"

Drover (writing the receipt): "Naebody could spell wi' this pen. There's been owt mony drucken bodies usin' it!"—*Punch.*

X who is given to exaggeration, made a statement one evening at table which was so fabulous that he felt himself that he had gone a little too far. Turning to one of the guests who seemed to be smiling slightly, he said: "You don't believe that?" "Oh, yes," replied the other, "I believe it because you say it; but I should not have believed it if I had seen it myself."

## ONCE FOR ALL.

Mistress: "By the way—Anna—Hannah—I'm not sure. Is your name 'Anna' or 'Hannah'?"

New Cook (startly): "Which my name is Anna, mun—Haich, Ha, Hen, Hen, Ha, Haich,—Anna!"—*Punch.*

Mistress (giving it up in despair): "Ah! Thank you."—*Punch.*

## POACHING &amp; PREACHING.

Rector: "Good morning, Mr. Catchpole! I'm sorry that I see you now so seldom at our service!"

Gamekeeper (Suffolk): "Well, sir, all I can say is, if the neighbours knowned as I were rig'lar at the ch'ch, you'd be 'nation sure to lews pretty nigh half yar congregation!!"—*Punch.*

## CHIVALRY IN THE PANTRY. (A FACT.)

"Please, ma'am, me an' coachman's regular wore out with them coals. Carryin' of 'em up between us in that basket makes our backs and cheeks hake dreadful!"

"Well, Buggings, what do they do in other families? I suppose they have fires in this weather?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am! But then the maids mostly carries up their coals theirselves!"—*Punch.*

## TELEGRAPHY EXTRAORDINARY.

A gentleman of slightly irritable temper, calling out loudly for some hot water from his bedroom, was unanswered. Seizing a small bureau, he shoved it before him to the head of the stairs, and sent it whirling, end over end, to the hall below.

The crash was loud enough to bring out mother, daughter, and all the servants. The head of the family was seated at the top of the stairs, elbows on his knees, chin resting in his hands.

"Oh, father! what is the matter?" asked the frightened daughter.

"Matter!" said the old man; "why here I have been a-callin' and callin' for yer nigh on half an hour, and now I've telegraphed for yer, that's all!"

A PLEASANT DREAM.—A Scotchman and an Irishman happened to be journeying together through a most interminable forest, and by some mishap lost their way and wandered about in a pitiable condition for a while, when they fortunately came across a miserable hovel, which was deserted save by a lone chicken. As this poor biped was the only thing eatable to be obtained they eagerly dispatched and prepared it for supper. When laid before them Pat concluded that it was not sufficient for the support of both himself and Sawney, and therefore a proposition was made to his companion that they should spare the chicken until the next morning, and the one who had the most pleasant dream should have the chicken, which was agreed to. In the morning Sawney told his dream. He thought the angels were drawing him up to heaven in a basket, and he was never before so happy. Upon concluding his dream Pat exclaimed: "Ooh, sure, and be Jabers, I saw ye going, and thought ye wouldn't come back, so I got up and ate the chicken myself."

## THE CALENDAR CLARIFIED.

JANUARY was originally called Gin-uary, because taken warm within to counteract cold without.

February was anciently styled Fib-ruary, on account of the lovers' perjuries uttered on Valentine's Day.

March took its name from the fact that it drills us—into holes, with piercing East wind.

April owes its denomination to the Saxon words epe and rīl, because during this month it rains cats and dogs and monkeys.

May may have been called May mainly because

May Day may fall mayhap on the first of the month.

June is so named because it comes after the first five months of the year, and is therefore June-ior to them.

July is duly denominated July because you will see the heavy dew lie on the grass during the month.

August is superlatively entitled to this nomenclature, because, though all the other months may possibly be very Aug (whatever that means), this is the August of the lot. (This was an aug-ward question to settle.)

September was originally written Sep-tember, because the evenings begin to draw in about the hour at which people indulge in the pleasant but unwholesome meal known as supper.

October is derived from the German, and is so named because it is the month in which we bear beer and the Germans make 'oak.'

November is, as we know, called No-vember for No reason in particular.

December owes to Christmas bills the name it drives; from the "d" s in which paterfamilias indulges as the small accounts file in.—*Fun Almanack, 1872.*

## PORT THE HELM! PORT!—STEADY!

'Tis a night of furious tempest  
On the awful Northern sea:  
Rush the fierce-plumed mountain billows  
To the great winds' minstrelsy.  
What though sailored there that vessel?  
What though in herself so grand,  
Held now as a little plaything  
In the tempest's strong black hand?  
Hark! "An iceberg on the starboard!"  
Far up on the mast they cry—  
Hark! "An iceberg on the larboard!"  
From it is the dread reply.  
"Port the helm! port!—steady, steady!"  
It is done; and so all night  
Pitches that ship on the ocean,  
Icebergs bearing down in might.  
On the heaved deck strides the captain,  
But a steady heart he keeps:  
Night is ended, and the vessel  
Calmly laughs at all the deeps.  
North Sea, tempests, icebergs, vessel  
In the darkness and the strife  
Make but one stupendous picture  
Of the battling human life.  
Icebergs always near in evils;  
Terribly mountain billows roll:  
"Port the helm!"—Thank God, 'tis morning—  
Safely rests the Human Soul! O. S. D.

## GEMS.

A SPUE in the head is worth two in the heel.  
They who give willingly love to give quickly.

A FOOLISH friend does more harm than a wise enemy.

He who expects a friend without faults will never find one.

As daylight can be seen through very small holes, so little things will illustrate a person's character.

He who says what he likes hears what he does not like.

He who has no bread to spare should not keep a dog.

SUCH is the force of imagination that we continue to fear long after the cause which produced the fear has ceased to exist.

NEVER quit your hopes. Hope is often better than enjoyment. Hope is often the cause as well as the effect of youth. It is certainly a very pleasant and healthy passion. A hopeless person is deserted by himself, and he who forsakes himself is soon forsaken by friends and fortune.

## HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

SWOLLEN ANKLES.—Bathe with water in which some Arnica root (*Arnica montana*) has been infused.

DOUGH IS THE MATTER.—It appears that bread made with sea water is very palatable and digestible, whereas meat boiled in it is not fit to be eaten, and the soup is quite nauseous. M. Dumas (of the French Academy) thinks that in the case of panification the sulphates and chlorides of magnesium, from which sea-water derives its acid taste, are decomposed by the baking process. His colleague, M. Boussingault, says that probably the chloride of sodium, or common sea-salt, forms in the bread a tasteless combination with the saccharine glucose, which latter is liable to arise from the action of heat upon the flour. He observes on this occasion that,

in order to render sea-water potable, nothing is needed but to sugar it, and that in the colonies they sometimes add sugar-cane to it. M. Chevreul, the Nestor of French chemists, corroborates the same view by stating that a combination of sugar and salt is practically insipid.

## STATISTICS.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.—The census of this tripartite colony shows a total population of 306,775; but many of the people think the number below the real amount, owing to suspicion keeping some from allowing themselves to be enrolled. Singapore Island has, according to the returns, a total population of 97,131, of which the town contains 70,000—nearly 30,000 below the estimate talked of before the census results were published. The total population of Malacca is 77,755. The total for Penang, or Prince of Wales Island, is 60,444, of whom 30,038 live in George Town, and the rest in the country districts; and the province of Wellesley contains 71,445, making a total for Penang and Wellesley of 131,889, the largest share in the fertile sugar and spice producing province of Wellesley. The Chinese in Singapore are 54,575; in Malacca 13,842; and in Penang and Prince Wellesley 35,716; or a total of 104,130. In Singapore the Chinese are 2,831 to 1 Malay, and in proportion to the Klings as 5:84 to 1. The proportion of males to females is as 6:3 to 1, among the Klings 4:7 to 1, among the Malays 1:9 to 1, and among other native races 2:87 to 1. There are in the entire colony embracing the three settlements 1,592 Europeans from all parts of Europe, or about 1 in 200 only of the entire population. Of these there are in Singapore 922, or, if we include the military, the prisoners, and Americans, and sailors in ships, a total of 1,946. The rest of the population embraces about 18 different Asiatic nationalities, and as many Europeans and Americans. Nearly all, however, speak the Malay tongue, which is regarded as entitled to the appellation of the "Italian of the East." There are in Singapore alone 250 licensed opium shopkeepers, and 199 spirit shopkeepers, also licensed; these are exclusive of 16 hotels and taverns. There is a very considerable consumption of opium among the Chinese population.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Marchioness of Bath has sent a donation of £100 towards the restoration of Kildare Cathedral.

The Princess de Salm-Salm has just been appointed governess to the younger children of the Princess Frederick Charles of Prussia.

UPWARDS of 900 persons lately visited the Prince Consort's mausoleum at Frogmore in one day, the greatest number since its erection.

Two fine young gray seals have just been added to the Zoological Society's living collection. This species, says *Nature*, although not uncommon on some parts of the British coast, has never previously been received alive by the society.

The death is announced of Mrs. Ryves, whose name will be remembered in connection with her claim to have descended from the "Princess Olive of Cumberland." The deceased lady was in the 75th year of her age.

A TELEGRAM received at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, from Madras, announces that the observations of the eclipse of the sun in Southern India were favoured by fine weather, and that the photographs were successful.

THE friends of the Orleans family are working hard to make the princess known in France. An expensive album of the family portraits is announced. The Duc d'Aumale is the only prince France gives a thought to. He is noticed because he will not "fuse" with Henry V.

The approaching marriage of the eldest of the Miles. Albe, a niece of the Empress Eugénie, with Don Angel de Torre-Vieja, Marquis de Los Rios, and Count de San Joaquin, is announced. These young ladies have already been married a dozen times by French journalists.

MARRIED SOLDIERS' QUARTERS.—The Secretary of State has sanctioned the erection of forty cottages at Woolwich for married soldiers and their families, on a site of War Department land situated in rear of the late Marine Barracks. This additional accommodation will prove a great boon to the married portion of the troops quartered at Woolwich, where very scanty provision at present exists compared with the importance and average strength of the garrison. It appears doubtful whether the spot selected and determined upon for the construction of these cottages is a salubrious one, but some amends can be made for sanitary defects by extending the usually cramped dimensions of married soldiers' domiciles.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. S.—Consult a medical practitioner.

A. Z.—Apply for your licence at Somerset House.

ELISIE.—We should advise you to read poetry and give up the endeavour to write it.

JENNIE.—Handwriting very pretty and far above the average merit.

OPAL.—The earliest public mention of the piano was at Covent Garden Theatre on May 16, 1767.

BERTRAM.—Purely a matter of taste. Opinions upon the point are pretty equally divided.

R. T. E.—We should think a description would be insufficient—a personal interview would be more satisfactory.

ANDREW.—We have no space for the insertion of your productions, even did their merit justify the publication of them which it does not.

WILL.—We shall be able to judge of the merit of your composition if you forward it to us. It is impossible to say what your capacity for writing may be without perusing your productions.

LINDA.—You will find the often-quoted words, "She never told her love," etc., in the third act of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night." "Die of a rose in aromatic pain" comes from Pope's "Essay on Man."

S. C.—Practise carefully and persistently, and your progress will soon become so satisfactory in its results that you will not continue to be oppressed by doubts as to your capabilities. "Patience and perseverance surmount difficulties."

G. W. N.—The superstitions belief that in order to avoid bad luck a dark-haired person should be the first to enter one's house on New Year's Day prevails, we believe, to this day amongst the people of East Lancashire.

C. Y.—"The Seven Wonders of Wales" is a saying well known in the Principality, but the wonders however relate only to North Wales. They are—The Mountain of Snowdon, Overton Churchyard, Bells of Gresford Church, Llangollen Bridge, Wrexham Steeple, Pystyl Chaiard Waterfall, and St. Winifred's Well.

ROTALEST.—Your information was correct. As you say, the circumstance of the late Prince Consort having been a practical engraver may not be generally known, but the fact remains nevertheless that both Her Majesty and the Prince employed themselves occasionally between 1840 and 1850 in the art of etching upon copper, receiving practical instruction from a gentleman, who for that purpose attended every day at Windsor Castle.

PRETTY BISSEY.—1. For a shilling or less you can procure a very good cookery-book at most of the railway book-stalls. This is the precise answer to your first question and a sufficient answer to your third. 2. In reference to the second question it can only be said that, as you are now under medical treatment, the best thing to do is to allow the adviser who orders the treatment for the serious malady to prescribe for the trivialities also.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.—1. Gold florins were first struck by order of Edward III. in 1344; the half and quarter florin were struck at the same time. The florin was then to pass for six shillings, though now it would be intrinsically worth nineteen. In the year 1357 that prince had purchased 174 florins from Florence, the price of each being 39*d.* 2. Bezan, or Bezan, was a coin of pure gold, struck at Byzantium in the time of the Christian emperors; hence the gold offered by the kings at festivals is called bezan. It seems to have been current in England from the tenth century till the time of Edward III. Its value has not been precisely ascertained, but it is generally estimated at 9*s.* 4*d.* sterling.

ARCHIE.—Experience teaches us that we must not suppose we are to have a mild winter when frost sets in before Christmas, notwithstanding the old saying prevalent in Kent "If before Christmas the ice will bear a goose, after Christmas it will not bear a duck." Some of our most severe frosts have begun on or about the 21st of December. In 1683, when the frost set in early in December, not only was there a street upon the frozen Thames reaching from the Temple to Southwark lined with shops, but hackney coaches plied on the river. Carriages were again seen on the river in 1762, when a hard frost commenced on Christmas Day and lasted until the 29th of January. The great frost of the present century, however, took place in 1814, and was accompanied for a week by a dense fog.

PHOTOGRAPHER.—According to an account published at the time it appears that "the microscopic telegrams sent from Tours were at first printed on thin paper by the

ordinary system of photographic reduction; but the paper was too heavy—a pigeon could only carry five of the little sheets, though they measured no more than three inches long and two inches broad. To get over this difficulty the despatches were photographed on pieces of collodion of the same size as the paper, each little bit containing thirty columns and averaging 20,000 words—that is to say, about the contents of thirteen leaded columns of a London newspaper. From fourteen to eighteen of these tiny leaves were put into a quill and tied to a pigeon's tail, several copies of the same leaves being sent by different pigeons, so as to diminish the risk of loss. When the birds reached Paris the quill was immediately forwarded to the telegraph station, where the leaves were read through a microscope to a clerk, who wrote out the despatches for each person. But this was a terribly slow process; it permitted the employment of only one reader and only one writer, which was insufficient for copying some 30,000 telegrams of ten words each. So after a few days the leaves were successively placed in a large microscope, to which electric light was adapted, and the magnified image of each leaf was projected on a white board, from which it was copied by as many clerks, taking a column each, as could manage to get sight of it from the writing-table. This, however, was still too slow, and the final impression was invented. Instead of throwing the image on the white board it was photographed straight off upon a large sheet of collodion—direct positive proofs being obtained, without any intervention of a negative, by the substitution of black for white and vice versa. The collodion sheets were cut up and the pieces were distributed to a hundred clerks, so that all the cargo of a pigeon was copied and sent out in a single day.

## THE KEEPSAKE.

I have a little gem I prize,  
I always wear it near my heart;  
Its smiling face, its gentle eyes  
Are more than love preserved by art.

Long years ago, one autumn eve,  
We walked beside the slumberous stream;  
The moonlight o'er its breast did weave  
A glory like a heavenly dream.

And she was rich and I was poor,  
But both were proud in wealth of love,  
And in our troth we felt secure,  
And willing mutual faith to prove.

And there she placed within my grasp  
This little locket which I prize;  
Her own sweet face within its clasp,  
Her smiling face and gentle eyes.

The bright stream sang a pleasant tune,  
The dry leaves whispered overhead;  
But sweeter than their sweet commune  
Were the fond words of love she said.

The years have made my hair as white  
As down upon the proud swan's breast,  
Since on that rare autumnal night  
Love's full confession made me blest:

And when the snow falls softly down  
I look upon this treasured prize,  
And think of one who wears a crown,  
And waits my coming in the skies.

C. D.

AUBREY, 5ft. 7in., light brown curly hair, fair moustache and whiskers, a good musician, and a corresponding clerk in the City at an advancing salary.

DUKE, 5ft. 6in., a draughtsman, twenty-six, honest, steady, and persevering—would make a good husband to a loving wife.

MAUD, a school teacher, twenty-three, medium height, a brunette, pretty, amiable, and domestic, would make a careful wife.

ANNETTE, short, and inclined to emboypoint, lively, good tempered, and loving. Respondent to be able to keep a wife comfortably, and if a tradesman preferred.

GRACE, twenty-three, tall, handsome and accomplished, wishes to meet with a gentlemanly suitor not less than forty-two, clever and well educated.

TOTTENHAM, twenty-two, 5ft. 8in., handsome, with dark hair and beard, a sailor, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, fair, tall, and of agreeable disposition.

SYD, medium height, dark eyes and hair, in a good position, has travelled on the Continent, has steady habits, and is fond of society. Respondent should be fair, not very tall, amiable, loving, and accomplished.

AMINE, seventeen, very fair, slight figure, blue eyes and affectionate, the daughter of a retired tradesman, can play and sing well. A dark young gentleman preferred.

ROXAN, thirty, 5ft. 8in., fair hair and beard, blue eyes, and good looking, a true-hearted sailor, wishes to marry a domestic servant of a loving disposition and good temper, about twenty-four and dark.

FABIAN, thirty, medium height, fair, not very good looking, but has a warm heart and a persevering disposition, is a surgical-instrument maker, and wants a good wife about his own age.

MADELINE, petite, black eyes and long dark hair, pretty, sprightly, and loving, devoted to intellectual pursuits, and accomplished. Respondent to be tall, educated, of superior mind, and able to support a wife in a good position. "Victor" would be a devoted husband.

VICTOR, twenty-seven, 5ft. 10in., dark, a clergyman's son, of independent position, intellectual and refined, wishes to meet with a young lady of good family, of agreeable manners, accomplished and fair, to whom "Victor" would be a devoted husband.

MATILDA JANE, thirty, cook and housekeeper, fair, and not bad looking, would as the wife of a sober, industrious working man make him a comfortable one and himself a happy man. No objection to a widower without family.

JOHN GEORGE, thirty-one, medium height and dark, a working jeweller, of temperate habits, and home-loving nature, would like to marry a young woman about

twenty-five or twenty-eight who could be content to settle upon the moderate salary which "John George" obtains by his vocation.

JULES, twenty-three, a lawyer's clerk, medium height, fair complexion, moustache, gray eyes, and has regular features, a fair education, and a good temper. Respondent selected who in dark, handsome, loving, and domesticated.

PRIMROSE, seventeen, fair, petite, pretty, and accomplished, speaks French fluently, and is no stranger to the kitchen. A sensible respondent of about five-and-twenty, manly, dark, and in a good position or one that promises to be so, would be welcomed by "Primrose."

OLIVIA, nineteen, tall, slender, and graceful, with brown hair and expressive hazel eyes, pretty and affectionate, only daughter of a widow lady of fortune, and accustomed to good society. Respondent should possess ample means, as "Olivia" is desirous of being sought for herself alone, without reference to "expectations."

ELAIN, 5ft., with golden hair, even white teeth, clear complexion, ladylike deportment, merry and good tempered, would like to correspond with a gentleman a little older than herself (she is twenty). Respondent to be of medium height, good looking, kind, intelligent, and fond of home and his "Elain."

HENRY HUBERT, twenty-four, 5ft. 5in., fair hair, whiskers and moustache, hazel eyes, jovial, and warm hearted, a good singer and performer on the English concertina, in an excellent situation at a rising salary, with expectations in all probability to be soon realized from other quarters, feels justified in endeavouring to settle in life and is anxious to meet with a suitable partner. "Henry Hubert's" requirements are moderate, as respondent need not necessarily be handsome, but amiability of disposition and a heart capable of true love are indispensable.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

G. P. is responded to by—"T. H. M. M.", thirty-one, short, fair, affectionate, and fond of home.

PETIT PAUL by—"Adine," eighteen, 5ft. 5in., very pretty, musical, domesticated, and fond of dancing.

A. W. W. by—"Laura," twenty, ladylike, has a little money, and a great desire to go to America.

ANNIE P. by—"J. M.", 5ft. 5in., dark eyes, dark complexion, black hair, and is a seaman in Her Majesty's Navy.

SCISSORS by—"Thimble," thirty-two, fair, fond of home, and a widow without children;—"A Dublin Widow," his own age and very fond of children; and—"Needle and Thread," thirty-six, fond of children, and would make a good wife to a good husband.

TRADIE by—"Madeline," nineteen, tall, dark, good looking, domesticated, well educated, and has expectations; and—"U. G.," dark brown hair and eyes, good tempered, loving, domesticated, well educated, and would be a devoted wife.

WALDKOT by—"Emmeline," nineteen, 5ft. 4in., slender figure, dark hair, blue eyes, pretty, domesticated, a tolerably good musician and singer, and fond of home; and—"Annie," eighteen, tall, fair, gray eyes, pretty, fond of home, and very affectionate.

HERBERT by—"Maude," tall, fair, ladylike, and domesticated;—"Alice Louise," eighteen, tall, fair, gentle, and thinks she answers his requirements; and—"May," nineteen, fair, nice looking, ladylike, well educated, musical, kind, loving, of respectable family, and an excellent housekeeper; would exchange careers.

FRANCIS by—"Annie," twenty-one, average height, domesticated, loving, and fond of home;—"E. H.," fair, loving, and meets all "Francis's" requirements; and—"Alice," tall, fair, rather inclined to emboypoint, light wavy brown hair, hazel eyes, good tempered, affectionate, good looking, and educated.

FRANK by—"Nettie," twenty-one, domesticated, loving, fond of home, and musical and poetical; and—"C. A. M.," eighteen, 5ft. 2in., the daughter of a sea captain, well connected, very nice looking, smart in appearance, dark complexion, dark hair and eyes, good tempered, domesticated, affectionate, would make a careful wife, and has a little money.

W. W. W. by—"Tessa," twenty-two, tall, well educated, dark blue eyes, brown curly hair, good looking, cheerful, and loving;—"H. M.," thirty, short, fair, has a warm, loving heart, and a comfortable home of her own, but her father must stay with her as long as he lives; and by—"Annie," twenty-six, 5ft. 5in., fair, auburn hair, blue eyes, good tempered, loving, and industrious.

TRADESMAN by—"Ellen," thirty-one, 5ft. 5in., light brown hair, blue eyes, and a widow with two children;—"Annie," tall, dark complexion, a widow, has no children, but is very fond of them;—"A Widow," thirty-six, with two children, and she would make him an affectionate and good wife; and—"P. S. W.," a widow, is about his own age, has one little girl, is very domesticated, and would do her best to make him and his children happy.

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